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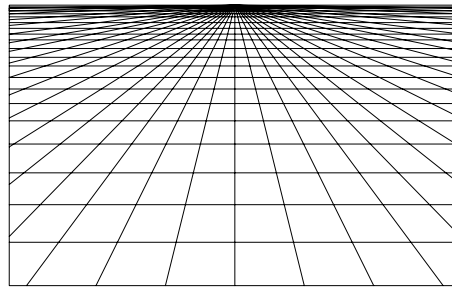
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The Fight Against Isolation in the Network of Human and Non-human Actors

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The Politics of Knowledge: Assessing and Communicating Risk
(GERSULP)

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The Politics of
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Synopsis:

This thesis endeavors to study the living conditions of Norwegian pre-trial prisoners subject to restrictions. These prisoners were virtually never permitted to associate with each other, nor allowed contact with family or friends, in order to mitigate risks to the investigation. Research shows that remand custody puts a strain on inmates. Solitary confinement (isolation) and lack of human contact can have an adverse effect on an inmate's physical and mental health. Three out of four suicides in prison are committed during remand custody.

The prison staff makes a considerable effort to counteract these effects. However, the network of relational elements in which these interactions take place is especially peculiar. This thesis proposes the following research question regarding said network:

Who are the actors, and how do they influence the actor-network of isolation for remand prisoners under restrictions?

In attempting to answer this question I utilize actor-network theory (ANT), which analyzes structural entanglements involving both humans and non-humans actors, and thereby welcome non-human actors into the realm of social science. Actor-network theory is also unique for its radical relationalism. Applying ANT to prisoner isolation networks provides a fresh perspective on remand prisoners and reveals actors previously not sufficiently recognized in relevant literature.

Keywords: Prisoner, isolation, Actor-network theory, translation, relationalism.

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The fight against isolation in the network of human and non-human actors

1.0. Chapter one, introduction

Aim and objectives: The main objective of this thesis is to study the living conditions of pre-trial prisoners in Norway subject to restrictions. I will apply Actor-network theory, which is designed to analyze structural entanglements involving both humans and non-humans, and thereby welcomes non-human actors into the realm of social science. To investigate and describe essential elements influencing isolated remand prisoners proposes the following interrogative structure:

Who are the actors, and how do they influence the actor-network of isolation for remand prisoners under restrictions?

Sub-questions:

- a) How did changes in the law inflict on the isolation system?*
- b) Is actor-network theory a profitable perspective applied to this field?*

The first chapter introduces the situation for remand prisoners as described by various researches. Actor-network approach utilizes the analytical understanding of a network by empirical means. Hence, the second chapter presents both theoretical and methodological implications. Chapter three describes “the network of isolation” in an attempt to explore and map central actors able to act upon each other. Space and scope do not allow,

however, an exhaustive analysis of all entities. The analytical conclusion will summarize the main discussion. A secondary analytical section will treat sub-question b) and other ancillary issues.

The interconnections in the network are endless. A way to start, however, is to present some paragraphs which constitute the legal grounds for containing remand prisoners in isolation:

The Code of criminal Procedure: Unofficial translation (www.lovdata.no)

§171. Any person who with just cause is suspected of one or more acts punishable pursuant to statute with imprisonment for a term exceeding 6 month, may be arrested when:

- 1) there is reason to fear that he will evade prosecution or the execution of a sentence or other precautions,
- 2) there is an immediate risk that he will interfere with evidence in the case, e.g. by removing clues or influencing witnesses or accomplices,
- 3) it is deemed to be necessary in order to prevent him/her from again committing a criminal act punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding 6 month,
- 4) he himself requests it for reasons that are found to be satisfactory.

When proceedings relating to preventive supervision have been instituted, or it is probable that such proceeding will be instituted, an arrest may be made regardless of whether a penalty may be imposed, as long as the conditions in the first paragraph are otherwise fulfilled. The same applies when a judgment in favor of preventive supervision has been pronounced or the question of extending the maximum period for preventive supervision arises.

§186. A person who is arrested or remanded in custody is entitled to unrestricted written and oral communication with his official defense counsel.

Otherwise the court, to the extent that due consideration for the investigation of the cases so indicates, may by order decide that the person in custody shall not receive visits or send or receive letters or other consignments, or that visits or exchange or letters may only take place under police control. This shall not apply to correspondence with and visits from any public authority unless expressly provided in the order. The court may also decide that the person in custody shall not have access to newspaper or media broadcasts.

Otherwise the provisions of chapter V of the Prison Act shall apply.

Chapter V of the Prison Act, § 82.2: Prisoners are only entitled to associate with other prisoners with the consent of the police.

The new the Execution of Sentences act advanced this to a legal level 01.03.2002:

The Execution of Sentences Act § 48: (free translation)

Remand prisoners subjected to restrictions subsequent to the Code of Criminal Procedure § 186 second section, do not have access to associate with other prisoners, hereby activities according to § 49. The Correctional Service shall, as long as it is practically feasible, do exceptions if the court or prosecutor gives authorisation to partial or full social interaction.

These paragraphs may be put into context through two explanations/ approaches:

1.1. Illustrative approach:

To provide a more thorough understanding of the situation for prisoners isolated from society, our fantasy may come in handy. Before describing the formal, legal and practical implications of the paragraphs above, please let the mind follow a short experiment. It suggests letting the imagination follow these lines of thoughts in something of a thought-experiment:

For some reason you are traveling to another country or another city in your home country. That is not important. You check into a nice hotel. The room is spacious with nice furniture, a view over the city, a modern TV and a well equipped mini-bar. Everything you need is brought directly by room service. Before going out you can relax in the large bathtub. Indeed, you find no problem spending a weekend here before going back to your family.

Suddenly the hotel's security personnel knock on the door. They tell you that for unforeseen circumstances you are not allowed to leave your room. If you need a reason, let us say that it is due to a sudden outbreak of the SARS-virus, a hostage situation or security measures because of a terror threat. When you ask how long, they cannot give a certain date, but it is for at least four weeks and may be prolonged. You are forced to stay inside your room, you have no choice. Even worse, due to security reasons you do not quite understand, you are not allowed to use the phone, or contact any of your friends or family. Naturally you find this very troublesome and you want to talk to the other guests, not only for company but also to share this with anyone else who find themselves in the same frustrating situation. Of course, due to the same security measures you are not allowed to associate with other guests either. The only possible contact is with security personnel, who you fortunately find helpful and comforting, even though in the back of your mind you know they are the ones controlling and restraining your actions. They are very busy, though. Since they are only two people for every 20th guest they barely have time to see you. Moreover, when they first talk with you, the conversation is interrupted by other important assignments. You pretty much have to stay all alone in this little hotel room 23 hours per day. Only once per day you are allowed to take supervised walks outside in the little backyard of the hotel. The uncertainty is still there, as you have no control of the situation and you do not know for how many weeks or months it will last. If you think this is an extreme situation, you can just imagine that you are forced to not leave your apartment for four weeks.

How would we handle such a situation? Imagine if we in addition replaced the fashionable carpet and flowered curtains with concrete and bars. The room made half the space and the view replaced with a tall grey wall. Further, visualize a metal door instead of the hotel door and the rest of the nice furniture replaced with a worn out little bed and a chair. The bathroom facilities would be replaced with a toilet two meters from the bed. Finally, we can add some social stigmatization and a higher degree of uncertainty concerning the duration of the stay.

Now we get closer to the reality in which I want to describe. First I want to briefly outline the situation for remand prisoners subjected to restrictions.

1.2. Judicial and criminological approach

Remand prisoners are under the police's custody and "belong" to the police as they are not yet convicted, but the prisons carry out the imprisonment for the police in what could be seen as a problematic marriage between two institutions; the police and the prison service. Remand custody is an instrument of the police's, prosecution's and the courts' power of attorney, where the imprisonment and use of restrictions are brought into play in the activity of penal institution's practical and organizational condition to act on these implications. Several stands in the Norwegian Correctional Service point out the problematic aspects in the communication between the two neighbor organizations (Hammerlin, 2001 gives an insightful presentation of this, which will be briefly referred to).

Currently, remand inmates are transferred from police detention to ordinary prison within 24 hours after a court has passed a committal order (full isolation being the only alternative in police detention). As expressed in § 171 and §172 of the Code of criminal Procedure, the remand custody is necessitated by the risk they impose on the society, by efforts to escape, efforts to consummate the crime or commit new crimes. Pre-trial prisoners were usually subjected to restrictions due to section 186.2. of the Code of Criminal Procedure (above), so they could not obstruct investigation by any means of destroying evidence, witness intimidation or collude with other suspects in the same case. However, the word isolation is not mentioned in the Code of Criminal Procedure, nor is it mentioned in any direct connection with the concepts of restriction and isolation if

reading the law. Still, due to the former prison regulations and practice, prisoners on restriction were only entitled to associate with other prisoners with the consent of the police. Hence, without any legal authority other than the prison regulations, prisoner on restrictions were prohibited from associating with other inmates. This practice was legalized in 01.03.2002, through what critics claim to be the backdoor of the Justice Department. As § 48 of the Execution of Sentences Act (straffegjennomføringsloven) reads, remanded prisoners who are subjected to restrictions in accordance to the Code of criminal Procedure § 186.2 do not have access to associate with other prisoners. In practice this means that they were isolated. Until recently (01.10.2002) the maximum length of isolation had no legal limit.¹

1.2.1. About the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) and Restrictions:

As many sources considered the CPT's criticism to be instrumental in changing the laws, I will describe the reality for isolated prisoners in light of the reports from this organization. These reports also provide a thorough insight into the humanistic and judicial problems of pre-trial isolation. My focus will be only on the parts concerning

¹ This regime differs from the normal everyday life in prison. Prisoners that are not subject to restrictions follow normal routines of the prison, allowing them regular social contact. They associate with other inmates and prison staff during their daily work or education from 8 to 15, and through social interaction in their spare time that lasts until they are locked into their cell at 2100. Different kinds of programs, focusing on rehabilitation effects, are also prioritized for prisoners serving sentence. During the evening they may participate in different activities such as sports or cultural arrangements, outdoor exercise, cook meals together or try to solve practical problems with the prison officers. Prison officers are supposed to be an integrated part of the dynamic social interaction. Prisoners may receive visits from family, friends or "the visitor service", and keep contact with the outside through phone and letters. These social activities occur naturally within the network of the prison, which necessarily means a certain degree of control and security restraints, as well as positively directed activities intending to increase social interaction. However, the remand prisoners subjected to restriction face another reality as they are denied such opportunities. There is furthermore a difference between closed and open prisons.

imposition of restrictions upon remand prisoners. CPT was based on the Council of Europe's efforts to guarantee human rights, and its increasing emphasis on preventing violations. Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights provides that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". This article inspired the drafting of the CPT in 1987 (<http://www.cpt.coe.int/en/>).

The CPT's mandate is: "The Committee shall, by means of visits, examine the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty with a view to strengthening, if necessary, the protection of such persons from torture and from inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment"². The Secretariat of the CPT forms part of the Council of Europe's Directorate General of Human Rights. The CPT members are independent experts with various backgrounds. It is based on a system of visits to see how people deprived of their liberty are treated. Prevention is the main object and priority.

The CPT visited Norway in -93, -97 and -99. It should be mentioned at the outset that the delegation heard no allegations - and gathered no other evidence - of physical ill-treatment of inmates by prison staff. Conversely, they found staff-inmate relations in the visited prisons to be of a positive and constructive nature. Material conditions remained of a high standard, and the delegation was impressed by the range of activities in which the majority of prisoners could participate (CPT, 2000). However, regarding the prisons visited, the main issues of concern are the treatment of remand prisoner under restrictions set by court while awaiting their trial. The criticisms of pre-trial isolation were continuously repeated in the reports to the Norwegian Government.

² Article 1 of the [European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#)

1.2.2. The criticism:

The reports from CPT founded important international criticism and were repeated in the 2000 report: “The CPT's delegation once again gathered evidence of the harmful effects of restrictions upon prisoners. Lawyers with whom the delegation spoke indicated that, time and time again, they see clients subject to restrictions who complain of anxiety, restlessness, sleeping problems and depression. One of the delegation's psychiatrists also interviewed a number of prisoners who had been subject to restrictions for prolonged periods who displayed a similar pattern of symptoms, including disturbed sleep and suicidal thoughts” (Paragraph 38, CPT 2000).

In the same report the CPT welcomed developments such as providing the prisoners subjected to restrictions activities in addition to outdoor exercise. Prison officers were trained to offer a number of in-cell activities, and to offer a chance to leave the cell and take part in other recreational activities, e.g. table tennis, snooker, listening to music or training sessions. In addition a, “contact officer scheme” had been introduced, under which staff had been instructed to take every possible opportunity to converse with prisoners subject to restrictions (this arrangements was originally introduced for prisoners on sentence). The delegation observed that the staff was making considerable effort to do so (Paragraph 40, CPT, 2000).

However, the CPT found this insufficient. Many prisoners imposed to restrictions were still spending up to twenty-three hours a day in their cells (Ibid).

Furthermore:

“It was noteworthy that prisoners subject to restrictions were virtually never allowed to associate with each other, even if there was no connection between the criminal cases in respect of which they were being held. This is apparently

because, in terms of section 82 (2) of the Prison Rules, remand prisoners subject to restrictions may only associate with other inmates if the police consent. The delegation found that the necessary police consent for such association was rarely - if ever – given.” (Ibid).

The CPT pointed out that once the court has formally authorized the imposition of restrictions upon a remand prisoner for a given period, it is for the prosecution authority to decide whether to lift or relax the restrictions within that period. In practice this means a police lawyer. Therefore, the delegation was critical towards the substantial degree of control the police sustain over the daily lives of remand prisoners subject to restrictions (Ibid: §40). The restrictions set by court (induced by the police) were routinely applied to prisoners on remand during their first four weeks of imprisonment, and periodically subjected to review of the court. However, restrictions could last for months. The court often followed recommendations from the police for further imposition of restrictions. Prisoners subject to restrictions experienced this system as psychologically oppressive. Accordingly, it functions as a negative actor in addition to the multi-factorial psychological problems of isolation. Several prison officers and health staff shared this opinion.

CPT gave several recommendations for how to counteract adverse effects of isolation for inmates under restrictions. Some areas that needed to be improved were: Increased contact between prison officers and inmates in isolation, contact between other groups, supply of information to inmates, activities on the cell, cooperation between the prison, police or prosecuting authorities, effective transmission of relevant information to other members of staff, the health care service and additional activities providing

increased human contact. Norwegian government replied that they wished to continue with their efforts. However, they pointed out that these activities are limited by the lack of funds and must be introduced within the current budgetary limitations. In addition to increased human contact they recommended that the responsibility for the decision as to whether a prisoner subject to restrictions may associate with other prisoners ought to be vested in the courts. These recommendations were in line with CPT's recommendations in the -97 report and the first originated critical review in 1993. However, despite the long- lasting criticism, bringing prison policy into accordance with these recommendations seemed to take quite some time.

An important aspect for understanding CPT's repetitive criticism is that most other European countries manage to sustain effective legal protection without such means (Brosvet, 2003 p. 73, Morgan, 1999 p. 203). Accordingly, the British professor of law and expert member of several of the CPT delegations, Rod Morgan, dubbed the pre-trial isolation the "Scandinavian way" (Morgan, 1999 p. 203).

1.2.3. Gentle torture? Short about the harmful effects:

Rod Morgan's harsh criticism must be seen as partly influencing changes in the law. He argued in his article *Moderate Psychological Pressure –the Scandinavian Way* (1999) that CPT found unequivocal evidence that in some cases (mental) illness was a direct consequence of prolonged isolation by court order, and therefore that pre-trial isolation in Norway sometimes clearly imposed the imposition of severe pain on prisoners (Morgan, 1999 p. 201).

By implying that torture involves the purposive imposition of severe pain in order to gather evidence-confession or information about accomplices, Morgan asked if not

Norway also do torture (Ibid). He added force to his arguments by drawing analogies to the Israeli State's former application of "moderate physical pressure" which had long been banished from the civilized Scandinavian club.

Furthermore, he asked if isolation is sometimes severely painful, is it purposefully imposed with a view to eliciting confession, intelligence or other evidence? He replied that the answer must be technically no because the Norwegian Constitution absolutely prohibits physical or psychological torture and because the Code of Criminal Procedure outlaws the use of promises, threats or coercion to elicit evidence from suspects in interviews (Morgan, 1999 p. 202). In addition there are explicit principles in the law regarding disproportionate duration and application of restrictions. However, according to Morgan, in practice the answer is sometimes almost *yes* considering the manner in which restrictions authorized by the courts are capable of being used, and are used by the police (Ibid). Accordingly, we can ask: If isolation causes moderate psychological pressure, and is exploited by the police in a purposive manner to inflict pressure on the inmate to reveal information, could this possibly be defined as torture?

As everyone familiar with the Norwegian system of restrictions knows, the experience of isolation is very stressful psychologically. The psychiatrist Tor Gamman (Gamman, 2001) provides a further insight about the risk for mental illness among inmates in isolation. He asserts that the risk to mental health generally increases with the duration of the isolation, but that certain inmates, who are predisposed for mental instability, cannot endure isolation at all. Gamman states that;

"In medical terms, one can describe an "isolation syndrome" characterized by symptoms such as reduced cognitive capacity, and an inability to sleep and maintain a normal daily routine. It is also associated with depression, anxiety, and

elevated feelings of distress. A comparison between samples of isolated and non-isolated inmates shows significant differences in well-being, use of medication and mental health. Other studies have shown that isolation is associated with a high risk of hospitalization during custody, and that more than half of the suicides in Norwegian prisons are committed during periods of isolation” (Gamman, 2001 p.42)

Hammerlin shows through his long-lasting research that three out of four suicides in prison are committed during remand custody (Hammerlin, 1992, 2000, Hammerlin and Bødal, 1988).

1.2.4. The harmful effects must be seen in relation to the problems custody involves:

In one of his articles regarding remand custody, Hammerlin (2001) outlines several areas of concern, which are important for understanding the coming empirical approach. 1) He discusses custody as a practical and administrative problem, where the complicated decision structure within the different departments related to diverse activity demands and practical requirements for the different actors result in systemic conflict (Hammerlin, 2001 p. 15).

2) Custody can be seen as a social problem creating health concerns. It might be said to produce suffering and conditions imposing a risk to health (Hammerlin, 2001 p. 16). Custody under restrictions creates concrete problems there and then. It reinforces latent problems, which may manifest after release (Ibid).

3) Remand custody is known to have negative effects on prisoners close to suicide.

4) We may consider remand custody and isolation as an ethical problem, seen from social and institutional perspectives, as well as at both group- and personal levels. Do the governments see the consequences of the arrangement from the perspective of ethical responsibility?

5) A main criticism of the remand custody is related to matters of legal protections, the need for imprisonment and restrictions. When assessing wherever custody is an appropriate interception in someone's life, many judges often apply standardized phrases (Ibid).

6) Police custody is a symbolic issue. Not acting on extensive national and international criticism gives a negative impression. It may also, through violence- and power terminology, be understood in terms of symbolic force and power (Ibid p. 21).

Furthermore, Hammerlin points out, in line with the article from Kristoffersen (1999), that remanded prisoners fall outside the positive remedial measures offered to convicts. This is a considerably problem as numbers shows that an increasing amount of releases from prison go off directly from custody, and that the use of remand custody has raised after 1993. Related to ethical consideration, Kristoffersen (1999) concludes that this increase is most likely due to the combination of larger capacity in the prison and a political climate for keeping the criminal off the streets (Kristoffersen, 1999). This group is usually the one with least personal and social recourses. As they are losing all the rehabilitation programs and following up that prison can offer, the adverse after effects may be extra prominent when the prisoners are released.³ If socially or mentally harmed by the isolation, they risk being a danger to themselves and the environment as the

³ Kristoffersen's main points were published in the newspaper Aftenposten 17.05.1999.

possibility for rehabilitation is weakened and the risk for the continuance of destructive life style is enlarged.

1.3. Changes in the laws, what does it mean in reality?

Joined with criticism from other international organization such as the UN's committee on torture as well as the long lasting national critics, CPT's criticism of the widespread use of restrictions resulting in long lasting use of solitary confinement, led to an outcry in the media and among politicians. Accordingly, after the national and international criticism of the Norwegian practice the Justice Department viewed it as a highly prioritized undertaking to go through the relevant rules with an aim to make necessary changes in the laws. However, it took some time before new laws were adopted in 01.10.2002. The initiative started in Dørum's first period as Minister of Justice, where two working groups were set up with a mandate to examine the use of isolation, and to secure a more efficient and thereby faster treatment of criminal cases. They started out independently, but as the subjects were strongly interrelated, the Department considered all the matters of custody together, based on the two working groups reports from 20th of June 2000 and 26th of June 2000. The suggested changes were unanimous approved in the parliament, and it resulted in the new law of 28. June 2002, nr 55 about changes in the Code of Criminal Procedure (faster treatment of criminal cases, remand custody in isolation). This resulted in changes of the Code of Criminal Procedure presented above. § 48 of the Execution of Sentences Act was removed.

In summation, these changes aim to secure a more reassuring treatment of the question of whether remanded prisoners should undergo complete or partial isolation, and in part reduce the application and length of isolation. The law distinguishes between full

and partial isolation. Partial isolation means that the prisoner is denied the company of specific inmates, as opposed to previous rules, which automatically implied full isolation when subjected to restriction. Consequently, the use of restriction is tailored according to the specific case's complications. Possible restrictions include the prohibition of contact with one specific person, to only the right to associate with one or a few persons (Circular letter G-16/02 p. 2). The new law contains restrictions relevant to the maximum length of full isolation related to the motive of the charges. Furthermore, the court shall set a specific time-limit for isolation. The time limit shall be as short as possible and must not exceed two weeks at the time, or four weeks if special circumstances indicate that a review of the order after two weeks would be pointless.

As explained previously, when the court ordered restriction, prisoners were only allowed to associate with other inmates in the prison with the consent of the police. Thus, the application of isolation was not vested by the court, but a consequence of the decision of restriction. According to the new law full or partial isolation is to be determined explicitly by the court, as the Justice department viewed the use of isolation as particularly incriminating, and because it constitutes a risk for the mental health of the imprisoned (Ibid).

To understand how the presented elements contribute to, and relate to the situation for prisoners subjected to restrictions, I want to employ an approach taken from the studies of the interrelationships between science, society and technology. A theory and a method that does not only refer to the social context when describing its influence, but makes an effort to specify the different relational factors influencing the interaction in the area of investigation, which in this case mainly takes place in a prison.

1.4. Actor network approach

In the theoretical chapter I want to show how Actor- network theory (ANT) can form a framework useful for studying the conditions of pre-trial prisoners under restriction. This approach may be viewed as a theory, a hypothesis, a point of view or even a philosophical perspective of understanding the society, within which a set of methods may be systematically applied. These methods which some accuse of radicalism, and others applaud as giving a complete picture of relational effects much conventional research overlooks.

In the empirical investigation, actor-network theory originated the structure of how to search for answers to the research question. In studying isolation effects, situations may occur where it is difficult to separate human and non- human elements. What seem to be social, architectural details, historical perspectives, or organizational factors, normally appear as distinct entities in conventional investigations. However, I will argue that they all are in directly interrelation, where what appears to be, for instance only social or purely human, is partly architectural and organizational as well as interrelated to additional heterogeneous elements of all forms. Therefore, I will employ ANT, which is designed to analyze such entanglements in which humans and non-humans alike are involved in my attempt to describe the situation for isolated prisoners. This perspective welcomes non-human actors into the realm of social science.

From this viewpoint I will form a case study to investigate which relational elements materialize within the Oslo prison network in relevance to the isolation issue. Accordingly, the analysis features interpretive reflections of considering the reality through social constructs combined with a critical assumption saying that social reality is

historically constituted, influenced by various forms of cultural and political domination. I will concentrate the focus of describing what kind of influential elements emerge in the network incarcerated by the prison walls. Still, I will briefly pay attention to components in the network impinging through the prison fortification from outside, such as: The media, politics, the court, lawyers, research reports, and the police. This implies that I will not only discard the distinction between human and non-human elements, I will also fracture the analytical barriers between the micro-and macro social.

A warning needs to be given at the outset. Natural limitations of this paper does not give the opportunity to make deep dives into every relevant element in the network or to make an exhaustive assessment of quantitative indicators or measurements of how the prisoners' or other actors' experience the isolation issue, nor is that the aim. My priority is to reveal stories about relational elements that work in tension with each other in the emerging networks. Therefore, the thesis must be seen to be an explorative approach presenting elements that by themselves evoke further investigation.

Nevertheless, I attempt include a variety of perspectives. Throughout the work I draw on my experience as a prison officer, readings, and qualitative interviews. This included two weeks spent in Oslo Prison, interviewing 5 prisoners, 5 prison officers and additional conversations with other employees. I also had informal talks with friends and colleagues and researchers. Interviews were conducted with researcher Trond Danielsen, who is especially experienced in prison issues, and with Professor Thomas Mathiesen, who is one of the most published researchers in the field of sociology of law, prison issues and media relations. I was lucky to get one hour interview appointments with representatives of the Norwegian Parliament, Justice Political Spokesman for the Labour

Party (AP) and barrister of law, Knut Storberget, and Political advisor in the Social Left (SV), Hans Christian Apenes. The lawyer and daily administrator of the law firm Elden DA was helpful with providing relevant material and contributed with a thorough interview. Lastly, State Secretary of the Justice Department, Jørn Holme substituted the Minister of Justice on short notice and presented first hand insight in the background and development of the new law. Economy discourages of this paper do not allow presentation of all these interviews. However, they provided important perspectives from the sphere outside the prison, which influence the Correctional Service policy.

Chapter II- A theory and a method.

2.0. Actor-network of isolation.

Introduction:

There are as many ontological perspectives, as there are ways to approach an analytical understanding of them. The world can be described as existing independent of how we understand it. As a fixed reality we may quantify or describe through scientific approaches. Another conception explains everything as social constructs where the world appears as we make representations in accordance to social effects. I chose an approach most in common with the latter, however, more radical, claiming that we should explore the social effects whatever their material form. Actor-network theory explores how society operates through set of relational heterogeneous elements, especially designed for analyzing imbroglios, in which humans and non-humans alike are involved. In this respect, I find this approach suitable to describe the relations operating in Oslo prison.

What is actor-network theory and how is this approach relevant to describing different aspects of the isolation issue for remand prisoners?

ANT is more a set of basic principles that constitute a general conceptual system, rather than a predictive theory. Furthermore, the approach has important methodological implications. It is just as much a method of investigation as a theory. In fact, it implies an analytical understanding of a network by empirical means. In the following, central methodological features will be discussed alongside its theoretical aspects.

2.1. The development of a new approach

Actor-network theory (ANT) evolved from the interdisciplinary field of science- and technology studies, which study science and technology as influenced by social and cultural factors. These studies reject the idea of science and technology as a linear, cumulative process independent of social forces with uni-directional influence on society. Within STS studies (science, technology and society), science is not seen as an objective enterprise disengaged from the rest of the social world, determining and dominating ways of thinking and social relations (Moser et al, 2001 p.10). Much STS literature concludes that scientific knowledge is not an untouchable and privileged form of rationality, but wins its credibility through socially embedded and culturally norms and practices. Common for different approaches within STS is therefore the postulate that scientific knowledge is socially constructed.

Science and technology studies borrow and extend historical, sociological, philosophical and anthropological approaches. Central concepts are the links between science and other sources of authority and knowledge, such as political institutions, historical and cultural traditions, and “common sense” understanding (Edwards, 2001 in Schneider 2001 p. 338), where generated truth is seen as malleable partly conditioned by locally and specific factors.

In the 1980s, reflexivity became a central aspect in the STS field. This meant that the same methods used to study natural science also were to be used to study social science. The attempts to show that natural science and technology were social constructs should also be applicable for studies within STS, leading to a reflection over their own production of knowledge accumulation. Much of this was influenced from the general

reflexive and linguistic influence that emerged in the fields of social science and humanistic theory in the 1980s (Moser et al, 2001 p. 24).

To avoid diving too deep into the historical origin, I will begin with the evolution of ANT, and make a short leap to the influence of Bruno Latour. Using literary moves making the objects more alive, he distanced himself from the reflexivity only focusing and reflecting over production of knowledge and the subject. Such a focus is more lively than hundreds of boring self-reflecting trains of thought (Latour, 1988 in Moser et al 2001 p. 27). Instead, he emphasized describing the world as material and alive. Therefore, the French school that Latour belongs to, draws the attention away from a too great focus of language. Instead he emphasizes a more realistic presentation of the world and its objects. The weight is on how the material is of significance (Moser et al, 2001 p. 27)

Through the 1970s and the beginning of 1980s there were active discussions between different schools of thoughts within science and technology studies. However, a common interest emerged in how the external, internal, science, technology and society develop (Ibid p. 28). A common interest in understanding these aspects led to a joint breakthrough and resulted in the book “The Social Construction of Technological Systems. New Directions in the Sociology and History of Technology” from 1987 (Ibid). The three editors, Wiebe Bijker, Trevor Pinch and Thomas Hughes, moved away from perceiving technological development a single source, away from technological determinism, and away from making borders between the technical, social, economic and political aspects of technological innovation. Three approaches were presented in the book.

Firstly, the social construction of technology, (SCOT) introduced by Wiebe Bijker and Trevor Pinch, works on the assumption that interrelated social factors lie behind and shape the growth and stabilization of an artifact. In common with the second approach it sees technology and society as a “seamless web” (Ibid). The metaphor of a “seamless web” was first introduced by the techno-historian Thomas Hughes in the second approach, where he used systems metaphors to integrate social, economic and political aspects, and to erase the micro- and macro level distinction. Both assume that technology or social artifacts can only be understood if they are interrelated within a wide range of non-technological and specifically social factors.

However, in attempt to avoid social determinism, by understanding that the social only, lies behind and directs everything, actor-network theory, in the third approach, goes one step further in the use of the “seamless web” metaphor. It breaks down the distinction between human and non-human actors. Put formally by John Law in the mentioned volume; “The stability and form of artifacts should be seen as a function of the interaction of heterogeneous elements as these are shaped and assimilated into a network” (Law, 1987 p. 113). This means that humans, technology, elements of nature, scientific papers, architectures, organizational variables, time recourses or the socio-material to name a few, may all be elements in a heterogeneous actor-network, and contribute as actors. Perhaps it is only lovemaking where it is interaction between unmediated human bodies, though a suitable place or contraception may play a role also here (point stolen from Law, 1992 p. 2).

Actor- network theory is analytically radical in the sense that it juxtaposes people with non-human actors raising ethical and epistemological concerns. In the following

ANT's ethical implications, together with its analytical and methodological implications, will be elaborated in an as systematical manner as possible, and seen in relation to how we can understand the network of prison. I say as systematically as possible because it is indeed a “messy” and malleable theory. This is however, precisely why it will work well in understanding complex prison systems. I will argue with its originators, that it is a flexible theory, functioning well in a focus on several different aspects of society.

2.1. Human and non-human actors.

What do we mean by “actors in the network” and what kind of networks?

As shown above, actor-network authors started out in the sociology of science and technology, with the notion that scientific knowledge may be seen as a product or an effect of a network of heterogeneous materials (Law, 1992 p. 2). By saying that science is not that special, and that what is true for science can also be said to be true for other institutions, we can “translate” the approach to other fields (Ibid). Power relations, politics, organizations, family, economics, media and technology may all be described with the same analytical tools. In the tradition of scientific studies, organism, scientists, articles, test tubes, computers, microscopes or funds may all be actors or actants working in tension in a heterogeneous network. Naturally, other networks propose other actors, depending on its focus.

How do we identify the actors in a network? To answer this introduces another methodological principle: The scope of the network under investigation is determined by the existence of actors or actants that are able to make their presence individually felt on it (Law 1986 p. 131). For instance, it is possible to say that the reports from the CPT affected on most actors in the “network of isolation”. Therefore, the CPT, or even the

reports by themselves had effects on several actors. We will see that also unusual actors such as physical entities are able of acting upon the human actors. In what we can call the actor network of isolation of remand prisoners the most central actors can be identified as: The prisoner, prison officers, research papers and researchers, architectural entities, the media, politics, international organizations, laws and prison directives, their crime, drugs, and organizational factors.

An actor is also always a network. "An actor network is simultaneously an actor whose activity is networking heterogeneous elements and a network that is able to redefine and transform what it is made of." (Callon, 1987 p. 93). Both human and non-human participants in the network become actants by how they are defined as acting upon each other in the network under investigation. An actant may be scallops (Callon, 1986), a key, a judge, regulations, doors or organizational entities. An actor is an actant endowed with a character, often anthropomorphically (Latour, Akrich, 1992).⁴

Each actor is related to a seamless web of other actors, some social and some otherwise, which work in tension with one another. It is all relational. That all is relational dissolves fixed categories. Different elements have no significance except in relation to their neighbors, or to their structure as a whole (Law, 2000 p. 3). This implication might be termed *radical relationality*, and stems from semiotics. Pushed further, we can say that ANT is semiotics. Semiotics may briefly be explained to be a method or a sensibility that has to do with, and explores, relations or relationality (Ibid). The principle is inspired by the linguistics conceptions of Saussure. Put simplistically, it

⁴ In this way entities become actants when acting upon other actors. However, several latter papers tend to move away from this notion by only utilize the term actor, thereby making this distinction more unclear. Therefore, to reduce confusing the reader, the term "actor" will be used exclusively when presenting the empirical discussion.

means that terms achieve their significance in relation to, by their contradiction with other terms: Man, woman, father, son, daughter, grandparents and so on (Ibid). Or: Laws, criminals, prison, bars, metal, prison staff, uniforms, isolation, health, and suicides. Here ANT releases some similarities with Michel Foucault's post- structuralist semiotics of materiality, which extends this beyond language to count for all entities. It implies that all entities achieve their significance by being in relation to other entities (Ibid).

Applied to the paradigm of imprisonment, this implies that people, entities, physical structures, and social relations, are not fixed. If we say that isolation is an actor that leads to adverse effects on remand prisoners, isolation also constitute a network of patterned forces revealed in a collision that occurs between different kind of elements. Each actor constitutes a network. It is a collision because the roles between different elements are not pre-determined. They each have a different kind of impact, and there are conflicts or collaborations between them. Some are more stable and powerful than others. Some actors "enroll" other actors in relations to a third actor, which, with joint forces working in the same direction, have a greater impact and influence towards resisting opponents in the network. Negotiations between actors and their roles become necessary. These actors and patterns are the ones I will uncover and describe. An assumption is that an actor may be either human or non-human, and that both types are equally able to act upon one another.

This radical notion that different kinds of networks are composed not only of people recalls certain ethical implications. Actor-network theory denies that people are necessarily special, and even more, it raises basic questions about what we mean when we talk about people. However, it is clear about avoiding human reductionism. It says

that humans are important, but when talking about networks the social is not simply human. It is human and more. All the materials that constitute a network or an institution, human and non-human, consist of ordered networks of heterogeneous materials. John Law emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between ethics and sociology, even though the first should indeed inform the other (Law, 1992 p. 3). He says this is an analytical standpoint, not an ethical position. Furthermore, he points out that it does not mean that we have to treat people like machines, deny them their rights, duties or responsibilities (Ibid). Instead such a perspective should sharpen ethical questions.

When talking about ANT, the argument is that different networks participate in the social. Networks are part of the social as they shape it and participate in the social interaction. Law argues that we would not have a society at all if it were not for the heterogeneity of the networks of the social (Law, 1992 p. 2). Furthermore, the task of sociology is to identify these networks in their heterogeneity, and explore how it is that they come to be patterned in such a way that they generate effects such as organizations, inequality and power (Ibid). Related to imprisonment, this applies to all levels; both the society as whole, as well as inside the prison or the prison cell. Prisoners subject to restrictions lose contact with important networks that enable them to communicate or attend to their social relationships. The way of mediating contact is working under peculiar circumstances in a very restricted network. For one in total isolation, contact with, and the availability of the prison staff is significant. To only focus on how they interact is not enough, we also have to consider under what circumstances and conditions. It will be myopic to focus only on interpersonal relationships when there are so many other interrelated obstacles to be aware of.

2.2. Methodological principles

2.2.1 Observers agnosticism

The first principle of observes agnosticism, implies impartiality between actors that participate in a controversy, so not to judge other's perceptions or point of views or reduce it to sociologic interpretations. Therefore, there is no censoring of opinions or interpretations of the different actors. It is first in the end of the analysis that such outcomes emerge.

Research usually reveals different perceptions, conduct or meanings between persons or groups, which/who may work in a tension or opposition to each other. This means that we should not judge, censure or choose side. Nor should we categorize statements or findings before they are analyzed. For instance, we should not generalize prisoners' or officers' behavior in fixed conceptions. In other words; leave all prejudices behind.

This is something I should attend to in particular, as I have participated in the network. It is of particular importance for an observer with a history in the network under investigation. I will attempt to retain relative objectivity through a critical assessment of all actors. As we all are actors in the real world and have our individual perceptions based on our personal history of social interaction, it is hard to achieve total objectivity. There is no tabula rosa. As the extensive literature on STS- studies shows, not even natural science with its positivistic traditions can allege to be purely objective in closure of scientific facts.

2.2.2. Generalized symmetry

In addition to an extended use of actors as proposed above, another methodological principle is called for: To treat the different elements in the network with the same analytical vocabulary. It does not matter if they are natural, architectural or social. They all have a certain related role to each other in the network. Advantages of this approach are to avoid dichotomies and distinctions between disciplines. Thereby attack the complexity of the networks through different sources, without simply filtering out coexisting relevant perspectives usually considered as contextual features.

This analytical implication derives from the idea of generalized symmetry, which means explaining conflicting viewpoints in the same terms. Both Callon (1986) and Law (1987) sought to press the symmetry principle of Bloor (1976) further than is normal for the sociology of science. In the sociology of science, this principle declares that the same type of explanation should be used for both true and false beliefs, and explains conflicting arguments in a scientific controversy in the same terms. Extending this principle leads to the description of all heterogeneous material in the same vocabulary. Because the ingredients in a scientific controversy or a social analysis are a mixture of assessments from society and nature, it is necessary that the observer only use one analytical repertoire in the descriptions of them (Moser et al., 2001 p. 94). However, an endless number of vocabularies are possible (Ibid). This argument has similarities to the arguments of Weber (Weber 1965, in Moser et al, 2001 p. 120). The sociologist, according to Weber, is guided by his own values (*Wertbeziehung*), and has to choose which parts of reality are the most important. After such a reduction of endlessly complex reality, it is then possible for the sociologist to start his real assignment. The principle of

generalized symmetry gives the analyst a similar authority (Moser et al, 2001 p. 120). In actor-network theory we have to consider both natural and social relations. The one conducting the analyses chooses the best suitable vocabulary, and it should be convincing. It can be called a vocabulary of *translation*.

How is this applied in analytical research? We cannot simply choose any given analysis. Certainly, we have to take any meaning important to the actor seriously, but to conduct a comparative analysis we need to perform a translation into common understanding of what is important. Our analytical repertoire is then transferred through different social contexts, and should not change, though new actors may be introduced. The vocabulary should not be replaced when we shift aspects or move through different levels. What is important for isolated prisoners will stay the same if we are inside their cell, about the prison, occupied with the political level, or when their situation is portrayed through the media. By using the same vocabulary throughout analysis, I do not need to dive too deep into political, institutional or organizational configurations, or get stuck in complicated social models.

2.2.3. Free association

This has no connection to psycho- analytic business. It means that we need to get rid of all a priori distinctions between natural and social endeavors (Moser et al., 2001 p. 95). A priori distinctions are more a result of an analysis than a point of departure (Ibid). We need to follow the actors in through their relations to the milieu and the different elements within it. However, to keep a certain order in the network, some degree of categorizing of actors is necessary. Because there exist an endless number of actors, some

limitations need to be made. Naturally it will be up to the investigator to argue for his/her choice of emphasize in a convincing matter.⁵

2.3. Translation

Actor-network theory sometimes presents itself as sociology of translation. The elements of such a term are highly explicit in Callon's article (Some elements of a sociology of translation, 1986), where this process is exemplified by the case of the interrelated actors: scientists, fishermen and seashells (scallops). It must be seen as a process of translation that goes through different stages, where the identity of the actors and their interaction are negotiated and narrowed down. In other words, it is a multifaceted interaction; in which actors construct common definitions and meanings.

In his article Callon describes the negotiations between different actors in a case of French scientists who try to develop a sea farm of scallops. Their story about the struggle of growing scallops includes scientific documents, scientists, fishermen, the scallops and natural forces, which were translated in the following processes:

1) Problematisation: This is a process of defining relevant actors. Define their identities in relation to how they contribute and make themselves obligatory in the network in which they build. Interdefining the actors through central questions bring or "enroll" new actors into relevance. Even one simple question may involve a wide range of actors and establish interrelated identities and connections between them (Moser et al, 2001 p. 99).

2) Interessment: In Callon's article this is a conscious process initiated by the group of researchers. Through interessment they evoke actions towards the other actors

⁵ My choice of emphasize will be described in the empirical analysis.

with in order to impose and stabilize the other actors' identities. For all the involved groups, the interestment leads to a pressure towards the entities the scientist wanted to enroll. This is induced by the scientists' common goal of growing scallops. The dynamic process is in this case a result of the scientists' interests. Both social and natural structures are shaped and consolidated (Ibid p. 105).

3) Enrollment: An actor may be "enrolled" as "allied" to give strength to a position, or scientists may enroll data as actors to support claims or arguments. "No actant is so weak that it cannot enlist another. Then the two join together and become one for a third actant, which they can therefore move more easily. An eddy is formed, and it grows by becoming many others." (Latour, 1988 p. 159). This is not to be seen as functionalistic sociology where society is defined by roles and actants. It is a way to define different roles and ascribe them to the actors that accept those (Moser et al, 2001 p. 105). Enrollment is therefore a set of negotiations that follows interestment and hardens the new network's or actors' identity through pressure, interest or sanction. In the resulting heterogeneous network, every actor is connected with, depending on, influencing, and strengthening the position of every other. A network then becomes solid partly due to the durability of the bonds that hold it together, but also because it is itself composed by a number of durable networks (Tatnall, Gilding, 1999 p. 958).

4) Mobilization: This aspect concerns whether the spokesmen for relevant actors or unities of actors are representative. The mobilization process creates spokesmen, who represent an even larger network of absent entities. To mobilize is to make unities mobile. It implies that actors are displaced from its original state and transferred into concentrations of spokesmen. In the case explored by Callon (1986), the three scientists

represent conducted research on scallops in graphic representations and mathematical analysis, fishermen's representatives are elected through voting to speak on behalf of all the fishermen, and the scallops that are manipulated to follow the scientists' wishes are generalized to represent the larger range of scallops. Likewise, a prisoner may present the case of several prisoners by communicating his views through media, even though they do not want to be spoken for. Furthermore, the experts in the CPT commission are made spokesmen to their objective. Can we also say that the hard physical structure of the prison represents how the state's accumulation of power networks is imposed to the criminals of our society?

Callon's notion of translation is a story of displacements and transformations. There are displacements of objectives and interests. Humans, devices, scallops and analyses are displaced. Displacement occurs on all levels. There are displacements through interestments, enrollment, and mobilization. To translate is to displace. It is also to articulate in your own terms what other people say and do, and why they do it, how, and with whom they are connected (Moser et al, 2001 p.116). It is to create a comprehensive system of networks united by the same analytical vocabulary. Seen as such, it is also to make yourself a spokesman, or to be a representative for different universes. Entities that constitute a network are often altered into texts or devices (Callon, 1986) such as academic papers, books, reports, documents, laws and prison regulations. Latour uses the term "immutable mobile" to describe these things, as when they are moved around, they remain stable and unchanged (Latour, 1987).

Latour also explains translation as a process of enrolling or convincing other groups of scientific findings by how they are systemized and translated into a scientific

paper. He argues that to propound a statement or project is to tailor the object in such a way that it caters to those people's explicit interests (Latour, 1987 p. 108). Furthermore, as the name "inter-esse" indicates, "interests" are what lie in between actors and their goals, thus creating a tension that will make actors select only what, in their own eyes, helps them to reach these goals amongst many possibilities (Ibid). It is about moving interests in the same direction. One way of making things becoming a fact is to present it in neater way or to simplify controversial arguments into sure statements. Another way is to link different elements together so to join the forces to stronger arguments.

"Nothing is, by itself, either knowable or unknowable, sayable or unsayable, near or far. Everything is translated." (Latour 1988 p. 167)

By quoting other authors, I hope to connect my study with renowned works, which are also actors or actants, and intended to make my case stronger, which is why I cited Latour and can shift smoothly to another famous example: Bruno Latour demonstrates the process of translation to show how vocabulary or items from other science are translated into the analyst's own terms. By working on the farm site of anthrax infection, Pasteur and his colleagues learned from the farmers and veterinarians. Then they translated each item on veterinary science and all relevant elements of farmer's life into their own terms, so working these terms is also working on the field (Latour, 1988 p. 145). This is illustrated in his book "The Pasteurization of France". Here Pasteur, the scientist, learned the names relevant for the farmer and veterinarians, translated them into his own stipulations, and "reconstructed" the "infected field" of the farmers in his laboratory. "The infected field" of the farmers is translated into "spore phase" in the laboratory. Accordingly, translation describes the process which allows Pasteur to

transfer the anthrax disease to his laboratory. Singleton and Michael sum up the features of translation to be defined as: “The means by which one entity gives a role to others.” (Singleton and Michael, 1993 p. 229).

2.4. *Weak and strong*

The results of my empirical operation will not be so a clear cut as Callon’s example. As promised, it is going to be far messier. I am met with a wider range of actors and several related networks, which work in different social contexts. Furthermore, the objectives of the actor-networks are not all that explicit or conscious. They work in a relational tension to each other, and cannot be described fully by enrolling participants and locking them into a solid chain of translations. I need more “noise”, and more than one story. Different stories of “isolation” need to be told, and to pattern the links that subsist between these stories. Therefore, I need a “translated” version of actor-network, which does a good job in describing the main heterogeneous elements in the “network of isolation”.

In reality, it is very rare to find such a clear example of the mechanisms of translation as Callon did. This approach has changed since its origin evolved in Paris in 1986, which means that I need the malleability and noise that this approach opens for. Thus, it is soft, plastic, adaptable, flexible, weak and strong. Weak, because it is diverging from its original, but thereby growing strong in explaining networks outside its original field of science and technology.

Some features of change and development from the original are well described in Laws article “Traduction/Trahison- Notes on ANT” (1997). He tells stories that are both faithful and unfaithful to ANT. Some close to the original and some altered. By attending to some of the changes emerging from the stories, of what he calls noise in the ANT

machine, he displays its complexities. Through stories about ANT by authors from various disciplines, he shows that the success of actor –network theory also has led to its dissolution (Ibid p. 18). It has passed from one place to another and has changed and become diverse. However, he concludes that its weakness and malleability also reveals its strength. He says that ANT cannot be told. It can best be represented as a set of little stories that are held together by ambivalence and fluctuations (Law, 1997 p. 14). We should embrace an art of describing, an art of describing patterns and textures that form intellectual patchwork (Ibid).

I cannot attribute my study to the “art of describing”, though my endeavor is to displace and transfer it to a different place ANT has not toured before. I will translate its benefits and achievements to the context of prison, isolation, restricted human interaction, laws and changes of structure. I will bend the term translation to the realm of social science to explore the interdisciplinary links of the isolation issue.

In many actor- network articles the focus has been on the success of different networks to achieve a certain objective. The success of the network is dependent on how actors relate to a translation with a common orientation. It is a result of joint forces. This was the case in Callon’s article. Struggles in the network produced questions –do scallops attach, can they be grown, will the fishermen’s cooperate? Central elements also needed to fall in order for Pasteur to succeed in reconstructing the “infected field”, and to thereby create a vaccine. However, in my case, due to both the organizational and humanistic point of view, the human actors involved are working for failure. Fighting for the destructive elements that constitute the network of isolation to break up- back into bits and pieces, and to go in different directions. They want the network of isolation, to use an

anthropomorphism, to fail in leading to psychological damage or even suicide among prisoners. Actors crave other networks to be stronger in the fight against adverse effects of isolation. One such strong actor has been the CPT, another one the prison staff. The network, in which they operate, will be described by the methods of ANT.

2.5. ANT implies certain methods

We can say that the method of ANT is fairly radical, displaying networks that for some seem irrelevant, amusing, or with too little configurationally scientific structure, giving it a non-comparative utility compared to more conventional disciplines.

On the other hand, we can argue that it is an innovative method describing and ordering relational links between networks that we have not been, but should be, more acquainted with in our analyses. Such an approach encompasses a wider range of actors, including both human and non-human, with the aim of avoiding social, cultural or economic determinism. Using the same vocabulary enables it to cut through different disciplines, yet maintain a comprehensible image of the case under investigation.

The first rule is to follow the actor. To achieve an understanding of the situation we need to follow the actors, not as fixed entities, in their flow of different negotiations and interactions with all the relational factors in the environment.

The main methods of ANT are the use of interviews and ethnographic research. Inscription, texts, databases and images of many sorts are central in analyzing knowledge work. Texts, scientific and otherwise, make action possible by transcending space and time. They also manifest the credibility of research, and communicate arguments between people, organizations and institutions, in the process of negotiating a common point of

view. A strong scientific text or political line of arguments may possess the power to enroll other actors. Hence it may be central in the network under discussion.

2.6. Reflections about approaching the prison:

It is by these means that I will try to give a set of reflections concerning the situation of remand prisoners in isolation. However, I will start out somewhat differently from how Latour started his “anthropological” research of the laboratory life and production of scientific facts. Whereas he starts as a researcher becoming a “native” (native in professional sense), I will start as a “native” becoming a researcher.

Though we both convey an intention to describe “cultures” or practices not very well known to the rest of society, by the use of a certain methods, Latour tries to open the so called “black boxes” where scientific facts are put and taken for granted, which contain the closure of scientific controversies. I will not try to display what is “locked into a black box”, but what society has locked behind bars.

Now to the differences. In “Laboratory Life”, Latour conceptualize a research procedure analogous with that of an explorer of the Ivory Coast. A researcher who, after having studied the belief system or material production of “savage minds” by living with tribesmen and almost becoming one of them, returns with a collection of observations which he can present as a preliminary research report (Latour, 1979 p. 28). In line with this perspective, but in the want for a better term, he called his studies an anthropology of science. By the use of participant observation analogous to anthropological studies, he intended to denote the preliminary presentation of accumulated empirical material. Thus he aimed to provide a monograph of ethnographic investigation of one specific group of scientists (Ibid p. 28). By deploying participatory observation as method they aimed to

come to term with usual problems such as biased reliance on scientists' own statements and misinterpretations in communication reports.

Could I call my former experience in the prison service participant observation? The answer is no, despite my total six years of working inside the high walls that enclose the prison life. But it is close, hopefully close enough to base a foundation for this research. Latour and his colleague Woolgar went into their study with no prior hypothesis or set of concepts of the field (Ibid). If I should draw further similarity, we could say that I defiantly started my work in prison as a 22 years old without any informed preconceptions. After being accepted and undertaking the two years of education at the Prison Staff and Education Centre in various relevant disciplines, I would say that absolutely most of us (prison officers) were well prepared for our jobs. The education for prison officers in Norway is rather extensive, where only a few out of many applicants are accepted.

This implies that I was not an unbiased observer; I was part of the "native" environment. I had experience from three of the largest prisons in Norway, all have received criticism from CPT concerning remand prisoner under restriction. Much of my work has been with remand prisoners. Furthermore, as my university studies in criminology, psychology and anthropology were completed simultaneously as working full time in prison, I could apply various perspectives to my work. I also continued working part time during this master program, including taking some shifts during the writing process. In addition I spent about 12 days in Oslo prison during my interview period in May 2003.

Formally we could not call this *participant observation* in Latour's sense of anthropological studies, as it would prompt ethical and practical questions to study my colleagues, so I should call it something else. I boldly call it "participant reflection". Through a retrospective analysis of my work experience combined with my ongoing involvement, readings and interviews, I hope to thresh capture the important elements of the isolation issue.

Empirical/analytical chapter

3.0. A description of the network of isolation.

Introduction:

The objective for this chapter is to describe the actor-network in which the interaction between prison officers and inmates takes place. When it comes to physical entities, I will pay most attention to those operating in relation to the cell, where the inmates spend most of their time. Through a discussion of important organizational factors, I attempt to bring further insight to the networks' influence on human interaction. Accordingly, the relational effects are in focus, not the individual differences. In chapter four, an investigation of changes in the law, will exemplify what may happen when some actors dissent from the network. The relationships of these changes to organizational actors provide an evaluative indication. This includes drawing relations between organizational entities and external actors (the CPT, politicians and the media).⁶

3.1. *Methodological considerations*

Perhaps the best way to achieve first hand information about how it is to be isolated from society is to go to the small prison cells and ask the people inside. Through my work as a prison officer I have been doing that for some years already, but this time it was in a different setting. I needed them to tell me their experiences and thoughts of how it is to be in such a situation, so that I could use the information as data in my analysis with a

⁶ Due to scope considerations however, not all organizational and external actors will be elaborated.

certain purpose and specific focus. Of course, the change of context required other considerations from me, now alternated into the role of a researcher, with methodological, ethical and practical concerns.

For this study I interviewed 5 remand prisoners and 5 prison officers in Oslo Prison, ward B block D. With the use of semi-structured interviews the aim was to trace down the dynamics of social effects whatever their material form, attempting to explore and map values and thoughts of central human actors in their interaction with the environment. This means aiming to fracture social contexts, in which prisoners and officers interact, to simple units, thus trying to rebuild and link social and natural contexts. It also means displaying the attributes and influence from entities by giving them an existence of their own, consequently, explore how they induce influence upon each other. Accordingly, the intention was to grasp relevant findings of the respondents' descriptions and see them in a relational context to the network, asking;

- Who are the actors?
- Are these actors able to enroll other actors? If yes, how?

I developed detailed questionnaires within topics I found relevant for my purpose using actor-network as source of influence. The aim for a quantity of the questions was to reflect how the actors were interacting with other entities in the network. This includes going into details about special routines, as I could for instance not simply ask someone not familiar with ANT: How do you interact with the door? I tried to follow the interviewer guide in a flexible way, using my questionnaires as a list of topics more than a list of questions. Therefore, emphasizing the importance of good conversations, letting

the informant talk as much as possible within the suggested framework. The talkativeness of different persons varied in both groups, as did the need for additional and clarification questions. Duration varied from 50 minutes to one and a half hour. All except two interviews were taped, with admission from the respondents. No identifying information is being kept with the data material. Admissions were also given by Datatilsynet (the Data Protection Organ) and the Justice Department, and in cooperation with the Prison Administration. Everyone was informed of duration of the interview, the purpose and the use of the material. They were informed that they did not have to answer every question and that they could withdraw from the interview at any time. To prevent biased interpretation of the primary data (interviews), and thus secure reliability, I did a literal transcription of all interviews.

The aim of this thesis is not to make a representative inquiry of the conditions for remand prisoners on restrictions, or a quantitative manifestation of how they perceive the role of different actors. Due to my research questions, I want to say something about who contribute as actors in the network of isolation, and which influence they might have. The time and resources I had available for this research, made me choose 5 informants from each group. Ideally, the research could increase its' strength with more interviews from both groups, as well as additional interviews with the leadership.

I will attempt to address contrasts between the groups in the prison, as well as see them in relation to the other interviews and research inscriptions. Interviews with researcher Trond Danielsen and defense lawyer Anders Brosveet, are important sources of information. This opens for an informant- triangular analysis with possibility to view the same phenomena from different perspectives.

3.1.1. Story one; the prisoners. Brief outline about background and selection

People placed in remand custody could be considered to be a highly heterogenic group of people. This is reflected in the research conducted by Danielsen and Meek Hansen (2002 p. 20). There 31 inmates were interviewed, who's age varied from 16 to 66. 11 were in prison for first time. The motive for imprisonment varied from manslaughter, rape to theft/larceny, and drug related crimes. Through the empirical presentation I will draw some parallels from my interviews to this inquiry in respect to prisoners' perceptions of their relation to the employees.

Even though I had fewer respondents than Danielsen and Meek Hansen, I tried to grasp some of the heterogeneity among the inmates. Every prisoner has a different individual and social history. They have different degrees of social capability and knowledge resources, and possess specific social, physical and psychological problems. Therefore, every individual's manners and perceptions of isolation differ (Hammerlin, Larsen, 2000 p. 29). So do the problems, and which ones they emphasize and experience to be most important vary. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw some general parallels and analogies between the conceptions about their interactions in the network of heterogeneous elements. The Government Report of the Norwegian Correctional Service (Kriminalomsorgsmeldingen) 27/1997-98 ascertains that the prison population has problems with economy, residence, education/work, their spare time, social acceptance, drugs and health. Together with classical and new research, we can determine that prisoners compose a very unfortunate and vulnerable social group. Furthermore, several inquiries show great differences between the prison population and the rest of society

when it comes to class distinctions, social situation and physical and psychological constitution (Hammerlin, Larsen 2000 p.31).

These traits are recognizable among my respondents, even though I have to point out my group is small. Based on my years of experience with prisoners, I would say that some of them are in a somewhat better position than the average in custody, but there are diversities among them and as a group they are close to be representative for the prison population.

In the study by Hammerlin and Larsen concerning a group of inmates that all have severe problems serving their time isolated in a cell, 8 of 10 informants asserted that they had used drugs excessively, with the problems that follow (Hammerlin, Larsen, 2000 p. 33). In contrast to this inquiry, drugs did not emerge as such a strong actor in the “destructive network” of my respondents, as it may be in many other cases and in particular the study of Hammerlin and Larsen (2000). Therefore, I choose not to elaborate on this actor. Two of them seemed to be, by my assessment and by their own assertion, psychologically very strong.⁷ Nevertheless, all of them described the isolation as problematic. All interviewed also had former experience with custody under restrictions, which was a comparative advantage in respect to other prisons and the former rules. This also indicates that the informants live an irregular social life with loose ends in the social network, including regular contact with the police, which is typical for the prison population.

It is hard to say if there may be some bias in the selection due to the fact that I had to interview the ones that were available at the moment. However, everyone questioned

⁷ One of which, perhaps being one of the most optimistic, reflective and positive person I have met in such a situation.

were positive about being interviewed, so the selection was not based on who did and did not want to be interviewed. The prison personnel helped me select the prisoners, who had been subjected to isolation. We chose the ones that were newly taken off total isolation for two reasons: First, there were some skepticism from the leadership about making interviews of people who the court had subjected to total isolation, public in a student project.

Secondly, by interviewing those that recently had been totally isolated, and who at the moment were on the new legislation termed “partial isolation,” or off restrictions entirely, gave me some further comparative profit. It gave me the opportunity to grasp how the new law (from 01.10.2002) was implemented into routines, and how that influenced the situation for the inmates. As the prisoners were transferred from full to partial isolation very recently, their perceptions were still warm, and they could also tell about the differences in the overlaps between the systems.

I did not interview any prisoner undergoing most difficult psychological problems, or who had attempted suicide during current stay, or prisoners placed in the wing for the ones needing extra observation or special treatment. This is due to practical and ethical considerations. It might be a disadvantage for the research. However, as mentioned, this text is not necessarily an assessment of quantitative indicators or measurements of prisoners’ experience of isolation, but rather stories about relational elements that work in tension to each other in relevant networks. It concentrates on relational networks that may be of importance for the prisoners’ conditions.

A methodological problem may be that the prisoners do not have total insight in the officers working situation, things prohibited by professional secrecy and actions the officers take without the prisoners' knowledge

The prisoners welcomed me and they were open about sharing their thoughts. Naturally, no matter how good terms we were on, it is necessary to point out that I will never become one of them. I am an outsider. Therefore, the observer's or the interviewer's bias may be present in this method.

The prisoner-informants are named from A to E. An elaboration of their individual situations is to be found in Appendix. How the inmates perceived the isolation is presented in the following section in the Appendix, together with the prison officers' perceptions.

3.1.2. Story two: the group of prison officers and relational elements

When we are studying, performing social activities, or carrying out our profession we are influenced by a lot of relational, social and non-social elements. For instance, in the simplest example of driving a car, factors like the car's maneuverability, engine, and technical factors are linked together with your driving skills, attitude, time schedule, personality, social context and weather conditions. Neither do prison officers act in a total vacuum. Therefore, this thesis will try to connect the profession of the prison officers together with a wide range of factors, and try to identify the elements most relevant to their work with remand prisoners. The prison officers might be one of the most important human actors in the network of the isolated prisoners. Therefore, it is interesting to apply this perspective to their profession. Some of the elements that work in tension to each other may be identified as: The prisoners, colleagues, education, legislation and

regulations, resources, identity, rotations of working shifts, safety tasks, motivational factors, administrative tasks and circulation of information.

The group of five informants consists of two females and three males in age from 27 to the end of 40's. Work experience with prisoners varies from 4 years to 22. My informants are selected from a small group of officers in a prison wing where everyone knows each other very well. Therefore, it is necessary to treat them in a more general manner as a group to keep the anonymity. I will not refer to sex, age or work experience as it probably would lead to identification.⁸

3.1.3. How to approach the empirical material in the symmetrical perspective of actor network theory?

As the theoretical and methodological presentation in chapter II implies, actor-network theory involves an approach a bit more distinctive than what conventional sociology presuppose. The principle of symmetry implies explaining conflicting viewpoints in the same terms and uses free association, which means the abandonment of all a priori distinctions between the natural and the social. Obviously, my informants are important actors in the actor-network of isolation, both in a classical and in an ANT perspective, but there is more to it. The prisoner in isolation constitutes the main focus for investigation, and the prison officer becomes a highly important human actor in this respect. Logically, they are in direct interrelation through verbal and non-verbal exchanges and obviously appear as essential entities in the network. Often forgotten however, is the physical environment in which they interact, which is also composed of non-human actors.

⁸ More details about educational background can be found in Appendix under section.

These actors may be identified as: The cell, noise, the doors, spatiality, bathroom facilities, TV, and communication apparatus. They do not only possess a physical influence but, as ANT argues, they have an existence of their own, and accordingly, they play a role for their own. Unsurprisingly, these actors do not act intentionally, and they do not have linguistic abilities. Therefore, to understand the influence from such silent actors we will need translations through discourse of speaking actors. Through analyzing the interviews I will try to follow the relevant actors and actants.

This approach has further methodological advantages: By following the actors it becomes clear not only to what extent the groups have various degrees of control over these entities, but also how they are more or less perceived by my informants in the sense that they are perceived as important in various extents.

As pointed out, human values may come into play when juxtaposing human and non-human elements. I remind that the use of anthropomorphic description is not an attempt to bring dead entities into life or degrade human worth to objects. It is an analytical stance, and does not mean that humans are less important. With these conceptual tools we try to move into the socio-material infrastructure of Oslo prison:

3.2. Dimension I: Physical entities in relation to the cell- a general description

Before approaching how each entity is perceived by the informants we will take a look at the overall situation prisoners are subjected to, and how these entities function. The colorless walls of the cell enclose the inmates' communication, movements and thoughts. It is impossible not to relate to this fact. In few other occasions will a "dead" actor so strongly affect on a person's way of life. The prisoner cannot escape these strong

elements representing power. It is hard to avoid the feeling of powerlessness for the one restrained in this network of social mortification and physical degradation. They have no choice but to interact. Interact with physical conditions such as: Limited space, grey walls, closed windows with bars, heating from the sun, metallic sounds and noise from the ventilation system, peculiar toilet facilities, and a heavy metallic door which is extremely locked.

What connects them, through this heavy construction to the prison officers outside, is an intercom on the wall. There is one window in the end of the cell that enables them to look outside. If we want to push it far, even the view the prisoners have is predetermined by the need to restrain the prisoner from communication. Sometimes the prisoner on restriction is placed where there is the least possibility to communicate through the window. Cell location also determines access to a view or natural light. Sunlight gives life to a sterile cell and is of great importance for many prisoners. How prisoners relate to these elements, works in tension to relational factors inside and outside his cell. Of course, the feeling of control and individual relation to these conditions is dependant on the prisoner's personal experience and psychological constitution. However, as emphasized, the focus of this investigation is on the relational elements that the prisoners have in common which together create heterogeneous networks of influence.

All these elements create something I will term a “destructive network”. A network which meets in numerous intersections with relational networks. It constitutes bits of- and meets in “negotiations” with what we may call the overall network of isolation. Where to set limits is hard, as we follow the different actors through different levels of scale and magnitude. The web may be seamless and endless. For now I will focus on the

components inside the prison, and then draw short lines to actors of direct relevance, as I see it. How the networks relate to each other is going to be discussed more in the end of this part. So far there is no doubt that the mentioned conditions compose a very robust network in several ways. By only its physical appearance alone the prison enforces destructive associations. Seen in relation to the power the isolation network represents, it is an actor-network enrolling other actors with ability to limit the prisoners' choice of action and reinforce their problems. Put in simpler English: The wall, the structure and architecture are fighting against their associates, the prison officers, in their counteraction against the adverse effects of isolation mentioned in the introduction.⁹ To disclose these relations require achieving a symmetrical existence by referring to all entities in the same vocabulary, and from both sides- prisoners and officers that is.

How do the prison officers and inmates interact in relation to the limitations and possibilities given by the physical conditions? Do physical entities influence how the tasks are performed and attitudes expressed?

The group of respondents varied in how they interacted with these components and of which importance they considered them to be, both between, and within the groups.

3.2.1. The properties of each physical entity

Noise, a robust actor: Informants A and B which had been in prison in Holland, England, Sweden and Germany said it was less noisy in Oslo Prison than in the others. However, most of the prisoners, as well as the employees, had experienced the noise of the

⁹ On the other hand, if and only if the police intentionally want to inflict psychological pressure on the suspect to make him talk, the actor-networks' destructive elements are working for them in that direction. It is needed to point out that the purpose for the police to impose isolation is to hinder the suspects from communicating, influencing witnesses or destroying evidence.

ventilation system as a big problem. They could not escape this noise or do anything about it, they could just relate to it. Otherwise, the prisoners emphasized the effect of noise differently. C was mostly bothered by noises such as keys, shouting etc in the first weeks. (this period is also the most critical period for the inmates concerning suicide or feeling of social disaster). According to psychological perspectives of learning processes, sounds and surrounding loose strength in time due to the process of habituation.

Two of the informants did not hear much noise. The other three revealed that different sounds like shouting, kicking the door or noise from the training room, sometimes annoyed them. Sometimes they also heard some noise from the intercom, which disturbed them in their sleep or relaxation. C and D who had been in this prison before, affirmed that there was less noise now after the reconstruction of the prison wing. In 1999 they rebuilt the prison wings, which used to be five open floors by enclosing them to separate sections. That made the prison wings more intimate and decreased shouting and loud noises. Three of my informants, and prisoners that I have talked to in general, described high sounds as problematic. They got tired and were less able to relax. Sometimes it is perceived as violent or scary, and sudden noises can make them nervous. For instance, the next door neighbor can sometimes show extremely loud malignant behavior.

Prison officers revealed similar relations to loud sounds, even though they, in contrast to the inmates, have more control over such elements. How they perceive this control may be important for the feeling of distress. They get a break from the noise when they leave work, and they can take breaks when needed. Three of the interviewed working before the rebuilding expressed relief about the decrease in loud noises, even

though they saw some disadvantages such as less overview over the prison and therefore a lowered degree of security. One of the officer- informants did not consider sounds as problematic. Two of the elder inmates affirmed that the improvements of the doors resulted in less noise breaking through. Noise as an actor does not play any crucial part in the institution functioning, but it is a durable entity in the network of isolation everyone has to relate to.

Window, a solace for incarcerated thoughts: For many of the prisoners in custody the view from the window is subject for several leisure activities, like counting cars, listening to conversations or following people's movements outside in the yard or just resting their eyes on something else. Maybe the most important attribute of the window is to provide some place else to rest their thoughts, instead of the harsh return that get reflected from the concrete walls. Therefore, we can reason that the view from the window contributes to the prisoners' state of mind. It is not a coincidence that apartments with a view go for double of the prices compared to the ones just showing the neighbors' wall. Most of the prisoners I have talked with consider the view they have from the window to be of great importance. If the window faces directly into the prison wall, it reinforces the feeling of being separated from rest of the society. The wall can break the horizon or totally obstruct the view, and shut out natural light. It decides the prisoners' sight, degree of darkness in the cell, esthetical perception and influence on his mood in such respects. B and E were not that much concerned with the window facilities. Conversely, they covered the window in periods to get better sleep. It is hard to say if they would have been more worried if they had been affected by negative factors such as a blocking wall or heating from sunshine.

Sunlight: Accordingly, how the cells are placed regarding sunlight and temperature is of significance, especially in the warm months of the year. Most of prisoner-informants and the inmates I have talked to in general complained about how the sun could be difficult to handle in the summer if they were unlucky about where they were placed. Thus, together with rest of the architecture, the window's way of mediating the surrounding natural and social environment may contribute as an important actor. It may be part of the accumulation of destructive details functioning against the inmate. Or it may play a counter balance to these forces. Anyway, it could be included as an actor in the network of the isolation, working in tension to the other components that influence the prisoner in his eight square meters.

Prison officers have also noticed the role of such actors. However without any clear indicators I will argue that they are somewhat less perceived by someone not so directly accustomed to them. Even so, the officers may pay less attention to those, they do not disagree about the role they can play, nor did any statements contrast the perceptions of the inmates. We might ask though: In what degree is this illusory passage to the freedom outside perceived and put emphasize on by the architects of new prisons?

The doors, a spot for interaction:

Another break in the incarcerating concrete walls is through the metal doors, which is an actor totally beyond the prisoners' control. A great deal of the human interaction takes place through the doors, as it is rather seldom that the prisoners on restrictions are let outside. There have been important improvements concerning the doors to the prison cells after the rebuilding in 1999. The doors used to be much heavier, noisier and difficult to open and lock. In addition to the normal key-lock, two big metallic lock stiles needed

to be slammed hard when closing the doors at nine pm and opening the door at seven am. It resulted in loud metallic sounds and revolting associations. Both the prisoners and employees expressed comfort for these improvements. One of the employees called it a humanizing of architecture. Still the door gives the impression of being anything else than therapeutic. It is a colorless heavy metallic door the one inside cannot control.

They know the regular hours it will open, but the people that control them may enter at any time of the day. This lack of control over the physical environment reinforces the passivity in movement and thought, and increases the feeling of not having independence. The prisoners' already vulnerable social identity is threatened further by not being able to have power over the most elementary social and human everyday functions. A, C and E were most explicit about this problem, even though they perceived themselves as being strong psychologically, and capable to adjust. All together, what constitutes a material representation of power. Nevertheless, even though it is seen as an oppressive entity and a barrier towards self-determination, it provides some degree of privacy for the prisoners. Of course, this extremely reduced sphere of privacy is largely controlled by the officers; however, when entering the cells and performing their routines the officers stated that they tried to show consideration. They tried to be discrete and act as if it were the inmates' homes. When going in to check the window- bars they tell what they are doing and some ask if it is okay to enter although they would have to enter anyway. Usually they knock before opening the doors, even though they paradoxical have to go through two locks first. Not all the inmates confirmed that everyone knocked, but they agreed that no one just marched in.

When waking up the prisoners they say “good morning” or similar, and need a response or a movement to confirm they are alive and well. It means that everyone more or less get disturbed in their sleep at 0715. In some prisons the prison officers have to execute the check of the window in the morning. As result the prisoners sometimes wake up very suddenly of someone passing their bed for looking at the window. Depending on how used they are to such routines it may be seen as another step into the prisoners’ little degree of autonomy. The advantage is that it is easier to make sure that the prisoner is okay.

Sometimes the officers also check on the inmates through a hatch in the door. The hatch can only be opened from outside and may be used to give short messages, deliver or arrange small practical everyday jobs, or to check in on the prisoners for different reasons such as violent behavior, special needs for special attention, or whether the person is close to suicide. Someone with psychological problems or feelings of claustrophobia may have the hatch open for periods, as it then provides a channel to the outside and lighten the incarceration. During the hot summer months it is not unusual to open these hatches for hours in order to refresh the air and cool the cell, in addition to the extended time in the yard.

During the practical tasks, which are mostly arranged through the doors, such as handing out dinner or hot water, the officers have little time for conversation. The prison wing consists of more than 20 cells in each floor. Combined with accessible staff and that for instance the dinner should be handed out to everyone within approximately 30 minutes, do not leave any extra time for conversation. However, the officers declared that they try to say a few words, and pay attention to the inmates’ state of mind during such

occasions. Often the conversations are initiated from one of the parts while the prison officers are standing in the door opening. If time allows, it is not unusual to stand talking like that for a rather long time. Nonetheless, both groups confirmed that initiated conversations often get pulled rank by time. If the officers sit inside the prisoners' cell for a conversation, they have usually made an appointment in advance. Otherwise, they stand in the door, and normally just enter the cell when checking the window-bars before night close up. When standing in the door they also keep the overview of the rest of the wing.

Facilities: The prisoners have their own TV if they are not on media restrictions. All informants emphasize the matchless importance of the TV as the main activity in the cell. Most of them watch TV from the bed, as the chair is not feasible because then they come to close to the TV. In Oslo prison they have their own refrigerators for food. That is not common in all prisons, as for instance in Ila prison and Ringerike where the employees have to bring the food, normally at certain eating hours. However, the inmates in remand have no cooking facilities, in contradiction to other prisoners who often make meals together in the common kitchen.

There is limited space and restrictions for personal belongings, and normally the people in custody have less personal items than the ones serving sentence. Personal entities may function as strengthening the individual identity in addition to practical purposes. The informants described how it helped their mood to receive their personal belongings, to have their own things instead of prison clothes. Thereby, avoid the humiliating feeling of wearing the same clothes for a longer period, and smelling bad. Not the least, receive money enabling them to buy extra food, smoke, sweets etc from the

shop once per week. However, often they do not bring money, and the money they receive in advance by the prison goes to tobacco.

The toilet facilities are not what most people are used to. Most private homes separate the toilet from the living room. The remand prisoner has to regard the 8 square meters cell as living room, bedroom and toilet, and despite of the hygienic factor, the place they have to eat their food. It is arranged this way to be more convenient for the prisoner, and for practical reasons as it would be resource demanding to follow the inmates to toilet when needed. In contrast to newer prisons in Norway, which holds high standard, the toilets are not built in separate rooms in the cells, or covered by any shades or walls. One thing is that it does not look nice, and underpins the distasteful structure of the cell. What my informants point out to be most problematic is the lack of privacy and control. Since there is no private room with lock or shades towards the door, they might get interrupted in the most unpleasant private occasions. They loose the autonomy over something most people have taken for granted since they were kids. Some of the prisoners told that they get used to it after a while, and that they try regulate their needs to the routines for when the doors normally open.¹⁰ However, they complained about the situation. Reasonably, such conditions influence the remand prisoner in several ways. It is part of several elements that may lead to degradation of identity.

As such it reinforces the process of institutionalisms or imprisonmentism, and creates an unpleasant environment. All in all the dynamics of the surrounding elements express something about how society treats and identifies the prisoner. Imposed to these

¹⁰ This is only one example out of many of how routines and the physical entities relate to the inmates' actions and feeling of autonomy.

direct and implicit representations of power, the prisoners are subjected to an array of elements which may influence his line of thoughts and interactions to other actors.

The discussion of these physical entities indicates that they more or less play a central role in the interaction between prisoners and officers. Less because the entities do not appear just as distinctive in every persons' consciousness. More because I will argue that they play a central role in the network, even though they are not consistently or explicitly articulated by everyone. In both groups of respondents the emphases they place on these entities differ. Four of the prisoners were highly aware of these actors. Thus they articulated descriptions of them varying from uncomplicated to especially sophisticated.

In general, however, the officers saw them as less problematic. Even though they are perceived in different strength it does not mean that such entities did not influence how both prisoners and officers interact in relation to them. If the informants did not give independent explicit descriptions of them, I could not "help" them to provide the ideally answers for my questions (Naturally, I asked several following up questions). Still, through asking detailed questions about the entities and routines related to them, it is possible to extract an overall impression that they do have a central place not only in most of the informants perceptions but also in the human interaction. Evidently, also how the prisoners have to relate to them directly when isolated. Hence, the physical actors play a crucial role in the overall functioning of the prison institution, but at the same time they work against their associates when it comes to fighting against the destructive effects of isolation. One way to conceptualize the functions of the non-humans is to imagine what other humans or other non-humans would have to do where this character is not present (Latour, 1992 p. 229). In general, the physical conditions in the cell do not

give much room for activities, which lead to the emergence of a less concrete but strong actor- passivity.

3.2.2. Living in dimension I, strategies towards the role of passivity- an ally or an enemy?

All together, the entities that constitute the cell form a physical network prisoners usually relate to submissively. As result an actor- network we can term “passivity” emerges. It is a conceptual object more abstract than the objects above. Nevertheless, it is considered to be an actor of great importance in the network of the isolated prisoner. When organizing the passive everyday life, how do inmates counteract or get enrolled by the unfortunate attributes of passivity?

The informants revealed some different strategies for how to relate to this actor in making the days go quicker. E, B and C slept as much as possible. B consciously made an effort to avoid coffee, vitamins and healthy food to get less energy. Both B and E, and in some degree C, turned around the natural diurnal rhythm so to watch TV at night and sleep as much as possible during the day. They responded positively if it influenced their energy level, way of thinking and how they interact during the day. Furthermore, passivity led to problems with the back, neck and – a general braking of body and mind. This indicates that their strategies may not be the best, and it is hard not to get enrolled into this network. The other two told about similar problems even though they tried to be in more physical activity, and followed what they saw as a more healthy rhythm.

Prisoner C: “You become lazy of not having anything to do, you turn around the day and as a consequence you fall into a kind of drowsiness.”

After four months of full isolation in 1994, informant C felt general pain in the body followed by psychological problems. The fact that this duration in full isolation was shorter (which may be due to the new legislation) and that he was able to work out in the training-room, helped him a lot. He also felt that the employees were more welcoming and professional than in Sarpsborg prison (small local prison) in -94. Four of the informants emphasized the importance of physical exercise, which was described as functioning okay in Oslo Prison, even though they would like to receive better facilities.

Informant A described a strategy of being in as much activity as possible, in addition to the training sessions, which he was granted almost on a daily basis, depending on staff recourses. He accommodated his space in the cell for extra exercises like meditation and yoga, and read several hours when he was not watching TV.

He had a dual vision how to counteract the relational effects of passivity. It was important for him to keep the routines both to stay healthy and simultaneously to ally himself with the passivity so keeping it enough boring to make time go quicker. A: "Boring is the thing, the more boring, the thing is, it goes quicker." Furthermore, prisoner A saw the importance of keeping a good day- rhythm:

"I think it is important to get in rhythm, the thing is I see many people loose rhythm, they stay awake until 3-4 in the night and sleep until 12-14 and totally loose the rhythm. They say it is boring in the morning but it is boring in the evening as well. I think you feel much better to stay in the normal nice rhythm, keeps you sort of healthy" ... It works for me, it is one of the few things you control yourself, you can control it yourself you know, I think it is better to get up and fall asleep at night."

On the whole he was more energetic and positive towards his environment. Hence, in contrast to the rest of the group he was more positive towards the possibilities and not only its constraints.

When asked if they were in any movement or activity inside the cell most of the answers, except informant A, were negative:

“-There is no space for that.”

“-There is no other activities to do here. As you can see, the cell is disgusting, and it is not nice in here.”

“-Just some reading when I had something to read and watching TV, not much to do, took some push ups in the cell but you get lazy.”

“-Watch TV, that’s the only thing, look out the window, sleep, and eat.”

“-Last time I did some gymnastics, but this time I had too much in my head, too much aggression. Because of the charges against me and the fact that my wife was going to give birth.”

“-The day’s special served on a plastic plate is the highlight of the day, or to take a shower, otherwise you do nothing.”

It seems like no matter the strategy, you cannot escape the boredom. At the same time, this boredom makes time go quicker, and quick is good. Therefore, it may be possible to say that the inmates are striving, with somewhat different strategies, to achieve the right degree of boredom. Boredom seems to be an enemy to the inmates’ physical and psychological health, but at the same time, they need to ally themselves with this element of passivity to make time go faster. Informant A described how it works when you do something and get your hopes up. Then you have to go over the same processes of boredom again, instead of just accepting the boringness.

The negative effects of passivity are highly perceived amongst the prison officers. A priority to counteract this actor is stated formally in circular letter 6/97, integrated into routines, and an important part of officers' training. Accordingly, my interviews affirmed that the passivity was one of the single most central actors imposing a risk for apathy and the resulting adverse effects. A further discussion of the negotiation processes in relation to this actor continues when coming to the organizational elements. Some of the limitation or possibilities of fighting against passivity also come forward when moving into the next dimension, outside the cell.

3.3. Dimension II, interconnections between actors outside the cell

As described, the physical structure of the cell creates a crucial actor-network the inmates cannot escape. It influences on the prisoners' state of mind, as well as enrolling other relational elements. The human actors have to relate to these elements in the everyday life, and it conditions the evolvement of routines- both for the prisoners and officers. The same goes for the physical conditions outside the cell: Space, noise, training room, shower, library, colors, view, uniforms, the doors and keys needed to open them. It is not needed to go into detail to understand that such relational factors may influence the perceptions of the inmates, as well as the work of the prison officers.

How often are they outside the cell and at what occasions?

The prisoner respondents varied in their descriptions of how often the door opens during the day. B, D and E who were the ones following the "sleeping strategy", or had problems waking up in the morning, provided the most negative numbers. However, the

two other also complained of the low activity level and how much time they had to spend behind the closed door.

The prison officers declared that how often the doors to the cells were open varied and depended on the individuals' needs and activities. Ruinously, the doors get opened these hours: at 0715, 0730 (for the ones needing medication), 0745 for handing out warm water, 0915 for airing, 1100 for allocating bread, milk, etc, 1500 dinner, 1815 hot water and when performing the last check of the inmate and window-bars before night shift at 2100. However, the hatch in the doors may be used in some occasions when handing out practical things such as warm water or mail. Besides, the doors do not open for airing if the inmates do not request it. In addition, the doors get opened on other occasions: For training, snooker, going to court, library once a week, or if an officer or other people from for instance health staff enter for conversation. A prisoner may be outside in several of these occasions during a day. On the other hand, if he is in a passive frame of mind and does not want shower or airing, or if there are scarce recourses or high activity level, he may not be outside at all. Prison officer: "How often they are outside varies from a lot to very little. Many prisoners are outside only one to two times-maybe none, because they are not interested in anything themselves". This must be seen in relation to former statements from the prisoners saying that they may get lazy and apathetic due to a life of inaction. Therefore, how often the doors open differ to a great extent.

Prisoner C: "It is nice to get out of the cell, but when you are out there it is not nice to get locked in again. First it is from worse to better, but the other way is not good, it's terrible to go from good to worse."

Without going into detail, we can see how the prisoners and prison officers are interacting in a relational environment outside the cell depending on:

- The physical environment: Space and availability of facilities. The shower room fits only one at the time and only one person imposed to total isolation can be in the training room as he is not allowed to associate with others. Only one person may walk around in the wing and so on. This effects the carrying out of practical tasks and activity level. Several aspects of the available activities are depending of feasible facilities.
- How the prisoners relate to the physical conditions: As some of the informants emphasized they are forced to share the same facilities and hygienic conditions. For instance, two informants complained explicit about how other prisoners made a mess in the shower. Two other complained on the badly equipped and worn out training room.
- How many prisoners there are in the wing at the time, and how many of them that are subjected to total isolation is influential. Those on total isolation are more demanding, due to the fact that they have to be treated separately, as they are to avoid contact with others.
- How the routines and regalements are interpreted. There are continuously interpersonal “negotiations” within the prison staff, prisoners and between groups in the prison about organizing the practical tasks, activity level and initiating human contact. Furthermore, they have to relate these negotiations to the physical

environment, restrictions, time resources, the working shifts and all the heterogeneous elements that constitute the network of the prisoner in isolation.

- A high activity level in the prison means many practical everyday jobs such as incoming prisoners, taking prisoners for meetings with court, police or other practical arrangements. This steals time for the resources left for caring tasks.

In order to take the prisoners somewhere it is necessary to walk through a lot of doors where the officer and prisoner have to act according to the one carrying the keys. It means that the officers have to open the doors, which for some may reinforce the feeling of powerlessness. One of the prison officers explained that he tried to keep a conversation going while walking through the prison to keep the prisoner's thoughts on something else. All of my informants confirmed that they found it natural to talk with the prisoners in different practical occasions. In general, two of the officer-informants saw the physical milieu as functioning, except the airing facilities.

As the prisoners also explained, the prison officers often let people walk outside in the corridor. The ones experiencing the isolation as most problematic are prioritized. Not all prisons have equivalent opportunities. For instance, Ila prison does not have this opportunity due to limited space, security reasons and staff resources, even though a smaller wing has other advantages. It is possible in Oslo prison because there is usually enough staff present in the relatively large wings compared to other prisons, even though they have to carry out some other routines simultaneously. Several of the employees describe this break as essential for the inmates undergoing problems.

3.4. Dimension III, the airing conditions:

Another break from the passivity inside the cell is to sign up for going on top of the prison roof, where the airing takes place. All informants, the prisoners, prison officers and researcher Danielsen agreed about the poor airing facilities for the remand prisoners on restrictions. They are described as some kind of joke, giving association to concentration camps, chicken in cage, tragic and not representative for Norwegian prisons. A prisoner said he felt like a dog there. Prisoners that are not under restrictions on the other hand, have access to a larger common yard with a football line, running track and benches for at least one hour pr day, three hours in summertime. In the case of remanded prisoners however, they are restricted to a solution of small separate grey concrete-walled booths measuring 15 square meters, where the inmates have to exercise alone so that they are not able to talk to each other. Most of the view to the sky and sunlight is blocked by some kind of tin plate and it is not feasible to sit on the cement floor. Obviously, there is no room for running or football-activities. They cannot see each other, and are not allowed to communicate by yelling. Conversation with the officers is restricted in that specific occasion.

The prisoners also complained about the fact that the airing was arranged too early in the morning (0915), when they wanted to sleep.¹¹ It would be a more welcomed break if it was in the middle of the day. Therefore, my informants had been there just a few times. They made clear that a better solution would be to great help. Compared to other prisons, this was the worst airing conditions they had experienced. However, the prison officers try to advance the offer if possible. In this way they “negotiate” with the characteristics of

¹¹ Keeping the difficulties of passivity in mind, there is a great problem that the prisoners want to sleep.

this actor. If only one prisoner wants to go, it is possible to let him walk outside between the booths, instead of being locked into one little booth, so that he can move around for longer walks. We could consider the array of negative elements related to the airing, as an actor-network that has “betrayed” its associates. It was supposed to be a positive counterforce; instead it has dissented this network, and joined forces with the network working in a destructive direction.

Researcher Trond Danielsen stated that the building structure is not adjusted to modern handling of prisoners, and that prisoners are unnecessarily isolated because of building conditions. He agreed with the one of the prison officers union NFF, that it costs money to considerably improve conditions for the prisoners.

Two of the prison officers explained that they used to warn the prisoners about the bad airing facilities, so they did not expect too much. The fact that Oslo prison is the largest prison in Norway, and the one with wings especially made for remand prisoners, makes this fact more striking. Everyone seems to be aware of the problems, but in the end it is about recourses and economy. Evidently, an alternation of the physical actors and an accommodation of the airing hours would be of importance to the prisoners in isolation. The cost for the physical improvements is another discussion, and is related to internal costs and budgeted, as well as political allocations, which again is related to priorities on criminal issues and concerns in the public opinion.¹² Where we want to restrain the network of actors is up to the investigator.

I have also learned that some prisons lack staff resources and feasible building structure enabling them to let prisoners on partly isolation associate or take part in

¹²The media often gives the idea that material conditions in the prison are too good, and sometimes paralleled with hotel conditions. Since starting in the prison service in 1997, one of the most frequent questions I am met with is if the conditions really are that good.

common activities as the law determines. Consequently, the physical and organizational actors may be described as stronger than the prison institution want them to be. A discussion in relation to organizational entities will exemplify this robustness:

3.5. Organizational entities; actors less perceived by the prisoners, but decisive in the actor-network of isolation

May organizational factors be treated as objects?

If we return to the post-structuralist version of semiotics, the answer proposes that an object is an effect of an array of relations- of a network (Law, 2000: p. 1). By maintaining the assumption that all social effects or concepts may be analyzed as an object in the network if they remain robust as they are configured within a stable set of links with other entities (Law, 2000 p. 4), enables us to attack them with the same analytical tools as above. We need to keep in mind that an object is an object as long as everything stays in place (Ibid). Accordingly, some of these entities are strong and some are less robust. Some evolved through years of practice.

What kinds of demands exist in the interaction with the inmates? What is important in the everyday work with the prisoners?

Actor-network theory says that we should be exploring the social effects, whatever their material forms, if we want to disclose how the relations between structure, power and organizational factors influence the actors in the relevant networks. What are the heterogeneous bits and pieces that are created, mobilized and juxtaposed, which by working in tension to each other generates the organizational effects of Oslo prison? By looking at a few of the organization's interactional effects I will attempt to relate them to how it influences the situation for isolated prisoners. As attempted all along I will try to

avoid the conventional dualism and analytical division between agency and structure, and what is more apparent in the discussion of the CPT, media and politics, the division between the macro-and the micro social. This becomes evident, as I will draw relations starting with the influence from CPT, to the politicians and further to how the political decisions were implemented in the prison.

I will argue that there is no doubt that the following organizational elements influence the work of the prison officers, both in their personal energy and motivation, as well as, how they are acting out routines. Neither a rule is an entirely fixed category. They can be tied to context, former practice, time limits, humanistic considerations and such. The elements that come into play in this part of the analysis are organizational factors such as: Laws and the prison regulation, information flow, relation to the police, resources, the time factor, the organization's focus and job requirements. Only a few facets of these entities will be enlightened, as space limitations become a powerful actor of this analysis as well. First, two conflicting organizational actors in the next section will exemplify the correlation between organizational entities:

3.5.1. Two actors in constant negotiations: Tension between spending time with the inmates and the pressure of practical tasks:

What is the relation between contact-officer duties and pressure from practical tasks? Does the pressure from concrete practical demands influence the priority of spending time in the cell with an inmate needing support? From my own experience I see the importance of pointing out the day to day tension that is present in the job requirements.

A great deal of the work is characterized by routines, but at the same time it often demands highly difficult decisions. This special mixture may be perceived as an

exhausting burden or as keeping the job challenging. Accordingly, all of the officers interviewed expressed that nowadays there were little time available for sitting in the inmates' cells. Smaller wings of 6-7 inmates often give more opportunities to increased contact. My experience from Ila Prison indicates that the officers there more often sit inside the cells if the activity level allows it. In a small prison though, a couple of difficult prisoners may take all the time and energy, and some days may be very hectic.

I am not focusing on the individual differences, thereby the conflicting roles. Nevertheless, ANT provides a perceptive of how important actors influence role conflicts. Analyzing the relational conditions between organizational actors working in tension to each other, however, enlighten how such conflicts come into being. These conflicting actors create expectations and cross pressure causing inter- and intra conflicts of roles for both officers and prisoners.

Everyone revealed that the contact with the prisoners is in conflict with the high demands of the practical tasks. Additionally, there is a high activity level and many practical arrangements resulting from the new people coming in and other people going out. This is symptomatic for remand wards, as they usually have the inmates locked up most of the time, so they are not able to perform their own practical arrangements. Danielsen agreed that the officers in a too large extent function as service personnel. It could be made more efficient and organized differently.

There is a consensus of frustration among the officers about this issue. They may have a bad conscience because they do not find time to prioritize contact with the inmates. Many experience this as a burden. On the other hand, the officer informants affirmed that they feel bad towards their colleagues if they stay for a long time with

prisoners in the cell if there is much else to be done. This may call for a more specific formalized focus and consciousness to prioritize human contact, and as expressed loudly the need for increased manpower. As we can see, these are relational and dynamic elements that work in tension to each other, which are in constant “negotiations” with the rest of the organizational structure. The actor-network of practical tasks seems to be stronger and thereby make the “caring network” consent to follow the path determined by a more dominant actor. Worth to mention, is that duties of control and safety also may come in conflict with caring orientated tasks.

To approach this discussion more thoroughly we can map all the heterogeneous elements in an ordering process to analyze which actors are most influential. We could “translate” most of the relevant elements in the different networks in an overall discussion. However, what I am trying to do is simply to explore and map the central actors according to my problem formulation, focusing in how they influence the situation for prisoners in isolation.

There are two important relational elements in this respect, which one of my informants emphasized: Focus and job requirements. These two factors act upon how the officers carry out their work and priorities towards the remand prisoners. The informant’s criticism concerned the lack of focus and specific demands in relation to the problematic effects of isolating prisoners. Accordingly, it is too much up to the individual officer, based on his/ her “humanity”, to take initiative for contact with the prisoners, instead of establishing a unison ideology of how we could solve this within the system:

“The work is unsystematic, and in the sense we have something systematic, I would rather say it is bureaucratic.”

Furthermore, the officer asserted that little is said about the motivation behind the measurements they are doing. The notes and scrutiny are done to provide a good presentation of the prison outwards. Therefore, the informant claimed, they are assessing quantity instead of quality. Three other informants said that the paperwork and listing of all actions in the prison are time demanding.

Another element needs to be added. By performing service tasks such as allocating hot water, food and mail, the prison officers contact, or at least see the inmates in those occasions. Making this more effective would definitely save time for more qualitative purposes aimed at increased human contact, but at the same time we would decrease some of the occasions where the cell-doors open, even though the interaction in those occasions is limited.

Manpower resources act upon all these elements and are in a large extent a multidirectional actor in the network. Both inmates and prison officers declared that it influences the quantity and quality of human interaction, and has to be seen in relation to the physical conditions as well the organizational structure. Obviously, this indicates that the durability of other organizational actors such as the available manpower is under negotiation with stronger elements in the chain.

In respect to these elements, the prisoners are actors, not just “clients”. Everyone involved translates shapes and perceives the organizational elements according to their own perspective. However, they may not have much to say about it. Furthermore, some of these elements are evidently less perceived by the inmates, thus the knowledge may be limited. Accordingly, the prisoners are enrolled into an organizational network in which they have little insight and really nothing to say. However, many officers will say that

this is not totally true, because some inmates are so experienced in the prison life that they really know how to adjust or manipulate elements in the system, like for instance getting many persons involved in solving the same issue. They may also use different personal strategies to adjust to the organizational entities prevalent in a total institution which the prison represents.¹³ Yet, they have power to influence almost nothing in the overall situation. Hence, these entities are influential for the prisoners' situation, but it does not flow both ways.

Even though the prisoners to a small extent perceive the complex relations between the organizational entities, they experience the results immediately. As discussed, the inmates are highly aware of the limited time resources and to some extent, how priorities between practical assignments and caring tasks come in conflict to each other:

Inmate C: "There are too few officers and therefore not enough activities ... I can see they are stressed, but the effort they make is praiseworthy."

Also the interviews with the officers indicate that they do not have as much influence on these elements as they would like. Neither did everyone possess the same degree of insight. In the overall picture of this emerging network of relational and conflicting elements, the fact that the prisoners do not have anything to say leads to less control and in many cases the extra burden of not knowing. Sociologists normally include another organizational variable- how the organization relates to external actors or organizations. In this respect the police is also an actor.

¹³ See Goffman, 1961 for an elaboration of such strategies.

3.5.5. Relation to the Police, restrictions and duration of isolation:

How do the prisoners relate to the police, and how do they perceive the remand verdict and need for restrictions? This perspective is relevant, as an understanding of the situation relates to how it is experienced. In that respect, the crime, the measures used by the police and remand verdict from the court become important actors.

The crime:

One of the prisoners explicitly revealed his crime as difficult to relate to. Another one felt considerable aggression towards the implications of his drug related crime and how his wife got involved in the case. Otherwise, their crime leading to imprisonment was indirectly influencing their social relations outside as it caused uncertainty, practical and social worries. In other occasions the crime may be a stronger actor in influencing the prisoners' explicit experience of isolation. If the crime involved inconceivable violence, or carries with it extensive social stigmatization, the prisoner often goes through substantial personal guilt and ambivalent self-perception.

Two interesting axes that could inter-relate, are the individual perception of the seriousness and stigmatization of the crime, and how that influences the experience of isolation. This demands a qualitative deep dive into to the psychology of the prisoners, in relation to their crime though not feasible for my investigation. Yngve Hammerlin shows in his research, a significant interrelation between the nature of the crime, especially violent crimes, and suicide

Use of restrictions:

Informants A and B had no understanding of why they were imposed to restrictions. Respondent A pleaded guilty and accordingly believed that the case was clear: “Why do they then need ten weeks of investigation and full restrictions?” The same goes for B, since he did not see that the police were investigating anything, or even questioning him during his six weeks of isolation. D had some understanding of his of restrictions, but since it had lasted so long (3 months), he considered it only torture to make him talk. Informant C felt it like a violation, but was more prepared for it this time than he was in his first experience. E saw it as a personal vendetta. They all considered it a harsh measure to make you soft and to talk.

However, and importantly, all but informant D who was charged for a serious crime and A (who had not been in Norwegian custody before) reported that the duration of this stay on full isolation was shorter than expected or shorter than last time. This was probably due to the new legislation and in that case a significant improvement.¹⁴ The officers-informants declared that there definitely were fewer people on full isolation now than only a few months ago. Nevertheless, it is necessary to point out that the prisoners still were isolated for a significant time and experienced it as problematic. Furthermore, it is hard to say if the stay in remand custody included the time on partly isolation may be same as before. Even though the new legislation leading to shorter time in full isolation and more human contact is considered by all groups to be of significant help, one must remember that remand custody still contains the uncertainties and problems mentioned for remand prisoners in general. There is no doubt that the new regulations were of great help, with shorter time on full isolation, being allowed to make phone calls and for some

¹⁴ We also have to relate the decisions from the courts in this respect, but that is beyond the scope of this chapter.

associate with other prisoners. Still, statements from prisoners and prison officers stress that with the resources available, the total time outside the cell does not differ that much between the ones on full isolation and partial isolation.¹⁵ This indicates that the custody system is a durable network despite modifications.

The prison-police relationship:

Lawyer Anders Brosvet and researcher Danielsen among others have pointed out in the interviews, that communication between the prison service and the police is not perfect. An improvement of the communication would lead to fewer instances where prisoners are unnecessary isolated. The prison should in a larger extent make an effort to contact the police concerning loosen restrictions, and help the prisoners with practical and social arrangements. Hammerlin also referred to the problematic relationships between the two institutions in one of his articles (Hammerlin, 2001, see introduction). Prison officers confirmed this. My interviews in general display the problematical relationship between these two central actors. Two of the officer-respondents described a lack of initiative from the prison to contact the police concerning insight in the use of restriction, and to arrange of practical and social concerns for the inmates.

Another element in the network concerns the effectiveness of the investigation to the police and the methods applied. All the prisoner-informants complained about the slow investigation process and the long duration of the pre-trial period. This is a complicated matter. However, I want to point out some factors that Brosvet emphasized in my interview with him, and a point he has argued in at least two articles (Brosvet,

¹⁵ The question of how the officers perceived the duration of restrictions are treated in section 3.5.1., where they generally saw the need for restrictions, although they also considered the adverse effects to be highly problematic.

2002 p. 37, Brosvet, 2003 p. 73). He argues that Norway has a strong tradition for suspect given statements. This tradition must be seen in a historical perspective as connected to the remnants of the old inquisitorial system. A system that until 1863 (just before approval of the new Code of Criminal Procedure, which essential features still remains in the law of today) had authority to place people in “custody of confession” on “bread and water” if the suspect denied to explain himself. Accordingly, the fact that Norway utilizes coercive means like custody on restrictions must be seen as related to the traditions to base the investigation on the defendant’s declaration, and a lack of respect for the defendant’s liberty not to explain himself (Brosvet, 2003 p. 75). Even though the judge acknowledges the defendant’s right not to explain himself, it is considered an unheard disadvantage if he refuses to do so. It may be held against him (Ibid).

Accordingly, Brosvet expressed that there exists a culture for focusing on confession in the Norwegian police. Consequently, the police center the investigation on gathering substantial evidence (such as telephone scripts and witness questionings) to confront the defendant’s explanation. This is a process, which is time- demanding, and it results in prolonged custody in isolation (Brosvet, 2003 p. 36). This culture must therefore be understood as a stock of ideas influenced by the historical traditions from the inquisition period. It constitutes a solid network of juridical traditions, which still influences the present prosecution methods. Furthermore, in line with CPT and the prisoner informants he sees the isolation as means to make the prisoners talk, especially if the police have a weak case (Brosvet 2003 p. 74, CPT, 1997: subsection 34). Psychiatrist Tor Gamman and Professor Rod Morgan and others have expressed similar views in their

articles (Gamman, 2000 p. 49, Morgan, 1999 p. 202). This argues for the importance of historical and cultural perspectives.

This judicial network of actors represents power relations where the remand prisoner is the weakest part. His/ her way to interact with the other entities in this network is mainly through a lawyer. The suspects may communicate directly with the police if they want to, but no matter what, they are enrolled into a network beyond their control. We could say that the prosecution and the court are administrating the lives of what is often the weakest and poorest group of the society. It is a system in which one has to relate, and that inflicts the future of the persons charged to a large extent. To some extent however, gaining influence is possible through contact with “independent actors”. Two such actors are the media and the CPT, which will be outlined in the following.

4.0. Example of changes in the network- What happens when some actors consent to follow a path influenced by a stronger actor?

This may be exemplified by a brief outline of how CPT influenced central actors to take action towards the isolation network, and how this was put into practice in the prison 01.10.2002. First, it is necessary to display how CPT became an actor:

CPT is a strong and durable actor operating with recognized authority. By strong diplomatic forces the organization succeeded in effecting an array of relational networks- from influencing politicians to making modifications in the law, to practical arrangements and an increased consciousness about ethical issues in remand custody.¹⁶

The CPT visited Norwegian prisons on several occasions where a number of interviews with inmates were conducted. These were translated into scientific findings and displaced into reports and diplomatic interactions. In this way they got enrolled into the actor-network of an organization with experts possessing diplomatic power through international cooperation. Translated through the CPT reports the prisoners' statements achieved an existence and strength of their own, which thereafter played a crucial role in political decisions. Displaced to more durable entities, such as inscriptions, the prisoners' accounts were able to crosscut through interconnections to other networks. Accordingly, the prisoners were more capable of influencing the power relations of the judicial-and

¹⁶ Keep in mind that several organizations and actors contributed to the changes, not only the CPT. Though, the interviewed politicians and lawyers pointed out the CPT as most central.

prison system in which they were restrained. Other national research reports and media representations may provide similar contributions.¹⁷

Accordingly, the CPT becomes an actor in two senses: As an independent organization with specific objectives described earlier, and in the fact that its reports operate as actors and were taken advantage of by other actors (politicians, media, and lawyers). The reports were referred to in political discussions, by researchers, lawyers and numerous organizations. Exploring the implementation of changes in the new law, involves, among other things, considering these in relation to information flow, which bring us to next section.

4.1. Have CPT recommendations been effectively transmitted to the prison staff?

Before exploring the implementation further, a preface to the officer's knowledge about the criticism from CPT provides a useful perspective. When asked whether they had received any information from the visits and criticism from the CPT's visits in -93, 97 and -99, no one could recall formal information from the management. However they had all heard about such or seen it in the newspaper.

Four of the five interviewed, who had limited knowledge of the criticism in the CPT reports, were in a small degree critical to the police's use of isolation. Accordingly, they could see why the police needed this in the fight against crime. Some replied that the criminal environment is so rough that the police needs the few measures they have, and

¹⁷ This is not the only way prisoners' actions are translated into inscriptions capable of inflicting stronger influence. A few cases of suicides committed in relation to isolation have been communicated through media. One special case of suicide committed after 15 month of isolation, was translated into legal transcriptions and displaced all the way to Supreme Court, as the relatives claimed compensation for blameworthy abuse of restrictions.

that it is necessary for evidence not to be corrupted. When asked explicitly about the long duration, which may occur in some incidences, they saw that as problematic but necessary in complicated cases, as long as there was no exploitation of the restrictions. Accordingly, they were aware of the harmful effects, tried to counteract them with possible means, and were concerned for the inmates. Still, my informants, and many people I have talked with informally, see the isolation as natural and necessary means for the police's work.

In contrast, only one of the informants who had obtained thorough knowledge about the CPT reports as well as national and international research concerning problematic effects of isolation differed distinctively in his perceptions. He disagreed strongly about the need of isolation and how it is arranged in the present system. This group is too small to make any definite conclusion, but as this may indicate, as shown in other research, that of course information and knowledge do have an effect on attitudes and people's perceptions.¹⁸ Accordingly, attitudes become manifest through action.

This indicates that information *flow* turns out to be an important actor-network in relation to the officers' performance. Especially in such a solid network that the prison constitutes. Accordingly, the organization's tacit and formal knowledge relates to the execution of the work. Furthermore it relates to the implementation of the legal changes.

¹⁸ It corresponds well to my years of work experience in the prison in the sense that the system of restriction has always been there. Ergo, most people think there is a good reason why the police's need for restrictions is necessary. It is an old system most people take for granted, because of the conception of how it is possible to solve cases if the criminals can communicate freely before trial. Additionally, a few cases

4.2. Information flow, bureaucracy and the implementation of the new law

As outlined above, before these changes became manifest, there did not seem to be any formal distributions of information about CPT's previous visits and criticism or the ongoing changes. It is important to highlight that the new legislation came into law from 01.10.2002. How the legislation was implemented in the court system and in the work of the police is beyond my focus. However, what I find most striking in my interviews with the prison officers is the revealed lack of information and systematic implementation of these important changes. All the officers said that there was no formal instruction or preparation before or after the new laws coming into effect first of October 2002. One expressed:

”We made the information sheets and directives ourselves ... so we can do the things correct in the same way. Otherwise, it is just thrown over our heads saying here you go, as with everything else. When you ask the leader, he doesn't know. It was just bang, and then it was like that. And of course it was chaos here then.”

The informant that had obtained the most knowledge about the isolation issue was expecting the new changes. Therefore he went to ask the juridical consultants and leaders in the administration about the new laws in the beginning of October. He asked if they had received any signals from the justice department or central administration about how to relate to the new legislation and what the changes would mean in their practical work with the inmates. According to the informant they had not heard anything from the central administration, and some of the consultants had not even heard about the changes themselves. He also pointed out that, approximately a month later, defense lawyers

informed the courts that remand prisoners still were imposed to restrictions the courts had not subjected, because the prison were not aware of, and had not adjusted to the new changes.

This was also subject to media attention, with the following headline in Norway's largest morning paper Aftenposten 25.11.02: "Prisoners are imposed to illegal isolation in Norwegian prisons." The article was focusing on how the prison administration failed to act in accordance to new legislation following from the criticism from CPT. Three prisons were mentioned: Oslo prison, Ringerike prison and Ila prison. In the article, Police Prosecutor Per Zimmer stated that several prisons were totally unprepared for the changes. The article also contained substantial criticism from the British professor of law Rod Morgan who was an expert member in several of the "torture committee's" visits. Chief Secretary Erik Lund Isaksen of the Criminal Service (Kriminalomsorgsavdeling) in the Justice Department complied with the criticism, said it was unfortunate and promised that they were going to resolve the problems. In a follow-up article the case attained attention from two members of the Justice Committee in the Parliament.

After this my informant confirmed that some meetings were called for in the prison during December, and some changes emerged. Still he lacked systematic management of the new regulations and did not know how to relate to it. I have not done formal research in other prisons, but dare to say that this is symptomatic for the Prison Administration as a whole. According to my interview with lawyer Anders Brosveet, informal conversations with colleagues and the newspaper articles in Aftenposten, numerous prisons had problems to act in accordance with the new law.

At the time for my interview (in the end of May 2003) the informants reported that the new regulations were functioning well and were a significant relief for the prisoners. However, the implementation of new rules seemed to be done informally by people on the floor without means of control from central management. A circular letter dated 21.10.2002 from the Justice Department contains information concerning the juridical implications of the new law, but did not outline any details about practical concerns for the officers. This shows that the first information was sent to the prison administration almost a month after the new rules came into effect. The Justice department could inform me that new directive from the Director of Public Prosecutions these days are under preparation to be handed out.

By following the recommendations from the CPT, the politicians dissented the network by aiming to alternate it in line with the international criticism. This may be explained through the process of translation. Through “problematization” they got to know their actors such as the isolation system, prisoners and all relevant actors. In accordance to the objective of improving the situation for remand prisoners, the CPT imposed pressure on the politicians through the process of “interestment”. Thus, they enrolled actors as “allied” to give strength to their position. Through mobilization they made themselves spokesmen for the prisoners, as actors were displaced from its original state and transferred into the reports. For instance, the prisoners’ statements were strengthened by displacing them to inscriptions. The CPT’s main means of enrolling actors is through a system of visits.

Evidently, the CPT succeeded. Central actors in the network of isolation fell off. Thereby, the politicians made changes in the network. However, in relation to the former

discussion, the network proved to be robust. It was hard to change. Furthermore, in relation to organizational entities displayed above, such as manpower and feasible building structure, the indication is that isolation remains a problem. This implies that two previously unrecognized, yet influential actors, organizational rigidity and political bureaucracy.

These changes can be seen as a consequence of energy given to it by everyone in the chain, a chain that constitutes the network of counteracting forces. In this chain of critics, politicians, experts, researchers, organizations and prisoners, the CPT was one of the strongest components. This shows that strong actors such as the remand custody institutions and the law, after all, if met in negotiations with stronger actor-networks, are to some extent fragile or open for influence. Another actor that in this case mainly supplied energy in the same direction was the media.

5.0. Media as an influential multi-directional actor

The definition of crimes and the social sanctions that follow are social constructs and need to be understood in a wide context of social factors and the history of the specific society. This is no doubt a too big task for this paper so I reduce it to three sentences: Single stories of crime or public opinions in general are “translated” to facts, sensations and politics through the media which again impinge back to the public and the politicians. This leads to the two corresponding processes of criminalizing and social stigmatizing people and groups diverging from the norm of society. If we use the terms of the “sociology of translation” as a way of understanding such macro social processes, we may systemize the social and non-social actors in an ordering process to see how they

compose networks of influential factors which act upon the prisoners. I will constrain such an analysis to briefly outline main characteristics.

The media becomes an actor in numerous respects, thus and is multi-directional. It influences on every other actor in the network, directly or indirectly. Hence, it is able to set numerous actors in motion in the system. Some directions of influence I will point out are:

- The media influences politicians.
- Attitudes in the public, thereby condemnation of crimes, call for harder “punishment”- prison life is too good and luxurious, or the opposite.
- The court system/the jury.
- An educational factor about prison. Some articles give a balanced picture of the role of prison officers, rehabilitation problems or prison life in general.
Publications about conducted research. Information, to the public- prison, politicians, inmates.
- Statements from experts, creating shared facts, facts-creating.
- Criticism, as for example the criticism from the CPT.
- A prisoner may communicate his case through the media to call for help or support.
- The case of a committed suicide may function as an actor in the media long time after his death, and influence the prison network.
- Media has the power to focus on injustice or to judge criminals as “psychopaths” before trial.

- In general, different groups such as the victims may speak through the media.

Naturally, journalists often give substance to an article through interviews. Statements from the interview are put into the context by journalists. They are cut into bits and pieces, which fulfill and create a complete article with a certain focus, often pre-determined by the newspaper or the journalists. This is done through a translation process. The statements are displaced and transferred to another place, where they become just as material as other actors. Through this sort of inscription they are given an existence of their own, endowed with more power, now able to cut through space and be displaced to other networks. They do not, however, necessarily tell the original story, and some points might be highlighted which represents interview bias. Perhaps it is even translated into a completely different context. Often newspapers disavow their responsibility when telling stories about our society. Are the media an innocent independent actor? In presenting a reality, do they not help to perform it? That is a long discussion. Nevertheless, every description tends to help into being what it describes (Law; 1999 p. 5). Furthermore, if the article concerns scientific complexities and uncertainties, it is not unusual that they get translated into facts and certainties. What is perceived as rather certain is that it does play an influence on numerous actors, if not everyone. On the other hand, actors may gain attention and influence through this powerful actor.

The media's multidirectional character implies both positive and negative influence for the group in the focus of this investigation. For instance it judges, stigmatizes and calls for harder punishment, at the same time as it may reveal injustice or

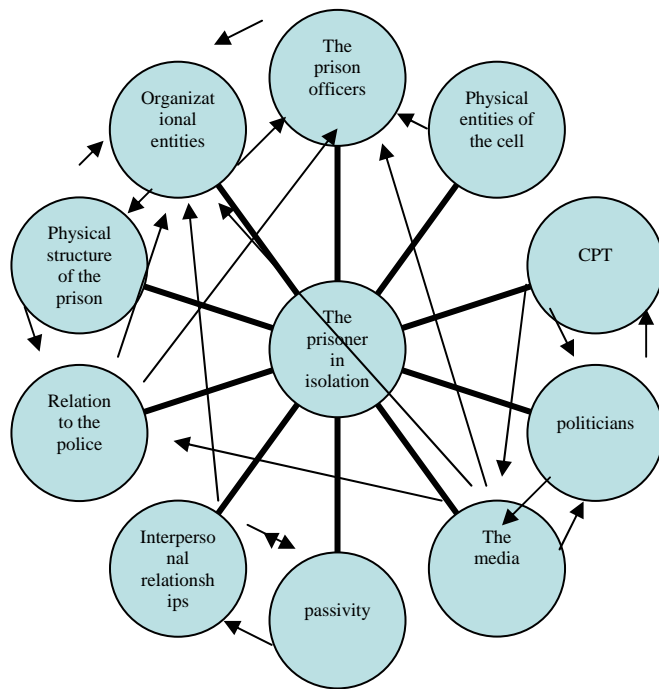
unworthy conditions. Altogether, it was an important actor in promoting energy in the chain towards changes in the law.

6.0. Analytical conclusion

The application of Actor-network theory applied to prisoner isolation networks revealed actors previously not extensively analyzed in relevant literature. ANT also introduces a radical relationalism that is unique to this approach. Equipped with some patch- working tools the intention was not only to identify, but also trace the relational effects they impose upon each other. In accordance to research question, the thesis has displayed and exemplified some of these attributes. To measure their strength however, or which specific influence they act upon each other, is much more complex. This requires the need to go into the business of indicating. Not all may be that easily mapped either, as it would involve an endless number of multidirectional traces. It ends up with what I promised when describing Callon's clear set out accounts of translations- this would be far messier.

Even so, through the process of translation some elements are found to be more robust and far reaching. There is no doubt that the CPT played a crucial role, but differently than the officers and prisoners who interacted directly in a network of other influential actors. Most of which pulled in the opposite direction if we consider the physical actors. This must be seen in relation to the organizational elements that emerged through years of practice, based on formal and informal rules. Rules connected to reflections of society and the laws aimed to punish those people diverging from the fine-meshed network of norms embedded in this society. The media actor can be said to influence all the actors involved.

Through the process of translating the isolation issue, the social and natural realities and their relations emerged. This is illustrated in the model below:



This model must not be mistaken for giving a presentation of reality, as that would be to perform reductionism. It is rather an example of how relational entities may be mapped in an ordering process to highlight interconnections between them. In an ANT perspective this exists in a seamless web, where the limitations are drawn depending on the focus of the investigator.

This thesis has examined some entities more exhaustively than other. Analytical comments were made as each entity was presented, including:

- The physical entities seem to be working against their associates, the prison officers, in counteracting harmful effects of isolation. They have to be seen in relation to the passivity that emerges.

- Some of these actors are more or less perceived by the two groups of respondents, but also within the groups. Evidently, they also possess different degrees of control, which influences the prisoners' level of autonomy.
- Prison staff made considerable effort to converse with the prisoners on restrictions. The officer-prisoner relations were unusually positive and constructive, though hampered by the peculiar nature of the network.
- The network of organizational elements adds an overall structure and must be considered in relation to the physical environment and human interaction. The time-factor, manpower, rules, routines, information flow, tension from practical tasks, focus and job requirements and the implementation of changes all proved to be essential factors in the analysis. Through the discussion, we saw how remand custody is also an organizational problem.
- Modifications in law were in a great deal initiated due to the criticism from CPT. The interviews indicate significant improvement after the new law. However, the implementation was not easy. This indicates a durable network, which is difficult to change due to its structural rigidity and political bureaucracy.
- In general, the analysis reflected many of the problems of remand custody in which Hammerlin discussed in his article (Hammerlin, 2001).¹⁹

These are only elements of the networks. It is perhaps impossible to delineate a comprehensive pattern. As John Law put it (Law, 1997), we have to focus on the many small stories and the patterns between them, because there may not exist any overall coherent pattern. Accordingly, each entity, relation or arrow in the synthetic model tells a

¹⁹ See introduction.

story. These stories influence each other, thereby some sustain the network while others change or disappear. In the end all that is solid melts into air (Marx and Engels, 1967 in Law, 1999 p. 3); distinct characteristics: human and non-human, architecture and the social, enforcement and caring, the specific and organizational, macro and micro melt into interrelations, where nothing is firm or fixed. Everything is in motion, working in tension with everything else, under constant negotiation. Therefore, it became difficult to provide such a clear-cut overall pattern, as in the case for Callon (1986). The durability of solid relations between powerful entities, however, creates an actor network, which is more robust- that be the situation for isolated prisoners or power relations on the whole.

In the discussion of the situation for isolated prisoners, we could see that powerful actors helped other entities to consent to a “detour” along a path influenced by other actors in the network. For instance, the CPT facilitated latent perceptions for some political actors, and imposed pressure through its international authority. The prisoners were enforced to follow a peculiar way of living, influenced by strong elements of power. These were perceived to varying degrees. Even so, the prisoners often have little to say about some of the crucial actors. The special ANT perspective, however, could provide some independent existence to what is sometimes overlooked. The ANT perspective’s place in my analysis is discussed in the next section.

6.1. *Ancillary conclusion*

Analysis and ANT, a discussion

Many people believe that reality is too complex to fit into any analytical model, that we can only grasp bits and pieces of it. Nevertheless, if we can say something about the heterogeneous pieces, we can also say something of the actor-network that these bits

comprise. Furthermore, by ordering them in a relational context we can also better understand the interactions and interrelations between them. By maintaining this principle of following the actors, we also continue the mapping process through interaction, so as interconnect more heterogeneous elements and analyze larger relations throughout chains of entities. Not to say that my descriptive stories are complete, but it is a start to a method of describing relational interactions in the prison which could be sophisticated with more time, resources and training. This unusual approach opened for new reflections concerning my profession as a prison officer.

The ANT approach may be criticized for engaging an endless number of actors, causing the problem: Where do we stop the chain? Implying that; the totality of actors that influence the situation for remand prisoners may be impossible to grasp. Recall that the scope of the network under examination is determined by the existence of actors that are able to make their presence felt on it. Furthermore, following Weber's arguments, the investigator is guided by his/her own values, and has to choose which parts of reality that are the most important. We have to make a reduction of an endlessly complex reality, by choosing focus. In this way, ANT is no different. Every researcher has to choose a relevant focus for investigation. However, either we carry out a qualitative or quantitative research; we need to be conscious about the elements we do not incorporate in the analysis.

Though, it is perhaps impossible to retell and perform stories about reality as a whole, we might have to suffice patch-work transcriptions to describe links. In this way we can well describe the function of overall "pattern" by tracing the differences and similarities between links.

As such, I found ANT to be a profitable perspective when applied to this field. It did manage to work as an explorative model in the process of mapping the networks operating in prison. The approach was open for looking beyond disciplinary boundaries, thinking from various sources without discarding their contributions. Thus, it broke barriers and enabled integrations of different fields relevant for the discussion. More time and space could join together diverse disciplines to a more elaborate description. By using the same vocabulary- one single register to discuss different fields-we thereby avoid considering the one to be context for the other. Actors are materialized through negotiations rather than fixed categories and pre-determined dimensions and conceptions.

The study shows that ANT may imply a certain degree of messiness, as in this case a large number of identified actors. Nevertheless, we need that in to certain extent, when approaching a comprehensive issue. This fractionality is closer to how reality really is. There are only partial answers. Still, creating links between them may lead to something close to a holistic understanding. If we want to explore the networks influencing the situation for prisoners on isolation, it seems to be a starting point. It is a way to explore the relational actors. However, this does not bring us to closure. It is not possible to close this “black box”.

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Appendix

Background of the respondents

Ages of the prisoner respondents: 33, 37, 18, 48 and 40. The average age of the prison population is about 30-31 years old. Four of the prisoners are Norwegian citizens while one is from Holland. One has a girlfriend, two of them are married, and one was supposed to get married before being arrested, the last is without any relationship. In general, the prison population has more loose relationships to family and partners. They are not only alone but lonely (Hammerlin, Larsen, 2000 p. 30). An investigation shows that 51% of 287 asked prisoners are single and 12% divorced (Fridhovs, 1992, in Hammerlin, Larsen 2000 p. 30). Of the 31 interviewed in Danielsen and Meek Hansen 19 were single/divorced.

On the inside: Specific on the individuals:

A: Informant A is 33 years old and from Holland. Languages are English and conversational Norwegian in addition to mother tongue. He has former stays in prison from Belgium and twice in England. The first ten weeks of remand custody was in full isolation, whereas he has been remanded for 14 month in Oslo Prison, with partly isolation and lately set off all restrictions. After having been taken off restrictions he had been working as a “ganggutt”, who is someone trusted with work outside the cell with tasks such as cleaning and serving food etc. His custody was based on charges for

smuggling drugs in large quantities, in which he pleaded guilty. The prison officers described him as a person with strong personal constitution, friendly and as amazingly humorous, which I found hard to contradict. After he went off restrictions he was able to keep in weekly contact with his girlfriend on the phone.

B: Is a 48 years old Norwegian citizen. His restrictions were loosened from total to partial isolation the same day as the interview. The duration of full isolation was 6 weeks, which he experienced as very hard. Before this imprisonment he had been subjected to remand custody in full isolation for five months in Ringerike Prison (the newest prison in Norway). He also had experience with remand custody from Germany and Sweden. The informant revealed that he had health problems and should have been to a treatment institution for stroke patients. This is also why he stopped using drugs.

C: Despite his enormous size informant C had a highly sympathetic bearing. He is 36 years old and was planning to marry before he was arrested. Together with his fiancé he has one child. The last five weeks he had been in partial isolation and he had worked outside as a “ganggutt”. Before that he was imposed to total isolation for 14 days with additional restrictions to media access. As the others he had former stays in remand custody. The first one when was during his youth, where he stayed seven months in full isolation, before going over to serve the sentence he was convicted to. Next time he was subjected to four month of total isolation the charges were withdrawn, and he got released from custody without any conviction. After these four months he clearly stated that he was psychological harmed afterwards. He considered himself to be mentally strong. C claimed to be innocent also in this case, and argued that his first crime and having the wrong type of friends chased him throughout life. Charged for large scale

armed robberies, his case also obtained extensive media attention, which he experienced as awfully frustrating, as it led to identification in his local environment and postulated without doubt that he was guilty.

D: Is the youngest, being 18 years only. The employees described him to be a little bit opposing the rules, and that he had difficulties adjusting to the isolation. He also received extra attention and help from health personnel during his three months on restrictions. The last month he had been on partly isolation, which enabled him to associate with other prisoners. D has the condition ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), which he revealed made it extra tough to be constrained in a small prison cell. He was used to be in practically constant activity. Therefore, he experienced the boredom and lack of activities as extra problematic. Everyday life in prison was extremely boring and he got fed up with everything and had no energy left for training when he was isolated. Therefore, he lost several kilos. Most problematic for him was to sleep. He was not able to fall a sleep at night because he was thinking a lot, therefore, he also got into a bad rhythm. The prisons officers gave him some extra time outside the cell, walking in the wing. After two weeks he got sleeping pills and offered regularly contact with psychiatric team.

E: Informant E is 40 years, married and received his second child while in his second week of custody. The prosecution let him visit his wife and child in the hospital, even though, he claimed the police was against it. He is a member of a well known motorcycle association. His first two weeks was in full isolation, and one week in partial isolation at time for the interview. However, he was at the moment not allowed to associate with the other prisoners due to a disciplinary reaction for misbehavior. The

prison officers had some doubts about him being willing to accept an interview, but he showed to be positive and forthcoming towards the interview. E had one former stay in remand custody for eight weeks on restrictions, which he described as very hard at that time. He was released directly from custody, which according to statistics has become increasingly common practice through the 1990's (Kristoffersen, 1999, see introduction).

How did the prisoners experience the isolation?

In line with former conducted research, the informants in general described the first weeks as the most difficult. Especially, they emphasized social losses, the uncertainty of not knowing what is happening and not being able to contact their family and friends or other people in the social network. Practical arrangements about apartment, economy, legal or illegal business and under which circumstances they were arrested constitute increased worries. In addition to the loss of freedom and contact with their close ones, they loss fundamental and normal activities in the society, losses of social competence, and not the least, fundamental to and the only possession one might have left, they certainly lose an important part of their autonomy. (For a detailed outline of the losses of prisoners see Hammerlin, 1987, 1994, 2000).

The way people perceive their degree of autonomy and which factors influence it, can be said to be a complex and individual matter of how they can control the elements in the network of heterogeneous social and personal elements. All my respondents described little such control. The structure of the physical and social environment functions in a strict regime of rules and routines, replaces individual control and initiative with the feeling of powerlessness and apathy. For instance, the respondents described that they lose even the total feeling of control over their body functions, as the employees may

lock up and enter their cell at any hours, even when they use their toilets, which are placed, in the cell without any blocking walls.

Some of the respondents emphasized the unwanted social conditions, which they have to share. They also pointed out the creative and physical deprivation resulting from lack of feasible space and entities for such activities. Instead they move into passivity, apathy and physical degradation in front of the TV, restrained to only a very limited availability of activities. In sum, or alone, these elements may lead to the feeling of a social catastrophe. The respondents varied in how they felt about these losses. Even so, all of them revealed being unable to contact family outside prison to be the hardest factor. Respondent A described about being on restrictions:

“Had no contact with family at all. You would like to say something, but you just can’t. ... First weeks was the worst, didn’t know, didn’t know what the girlfriend was thinking, not nice. I really hated not being able to talk with my girlfriend, which was *really* really stressful, because you just don’t know, you want to know but you can’t know what she is thinking, and what’s happening, and nobody could tell you. I was happy that my lawyer could call her to tell that I was okay, but that’s it. Nothing came back. After 10 weeks it worked out okay, but it is only because I have such a nice girlfriend...laugh.

“I think it was senseless I was not allowed to speak to anybody, I mean it was senseless, could not make phone calls, write letters, strange.”

D: “I could not sleep because I am thinking (about family), and I needed sleeping pills...”

He also received psychiatric help.

E: “You sleep and you think about it, when you wake up you think about it, that wasn’t nice. Sometimes I could not sleep.”

D: “It’s most difficult for the ones outside, and that was stressing me. This time it was extra hard.”

The inmates’ perceptions of human actors/ the prison officers:

Concerning the prison officers attitudes in their work with remand prisoners my informants corresponds with the results from Danielsen and Meek Hansen (2002). They aimed to conduct a thorough user specific/ customized survey for the inmates to evaluate the quality of custody work. This is probably the first European investigation where the clients /prisoners evaluate the prison officers. Danielsen told in the interview that he knew the officers are doing a good job, but was surprised of the exceptionally good results. With measurements indicators running from 1.0- 4.0 where 4.0 is exceptional good, the median of the prison officers attitudes landed on the outstanding 3.6. We can conclude from these results that the prison officers are an important positive factor in the prisoners’ network.

However, the officers in Danielsen and Meek Hansen investigation did not score highly on flexibility and individual needs. Furthermore, the inmates reported that they were satisfied with the officers, but that they did not see them much. This is due to other factors such as staff resources, that the work is restricted by the police’ interests and that they are bound by the internal rules and routines.

During my interviews the prisoners several times talked positively about the officers before I asked them the actual questions. However there was not total consensus. D and E expressed that there were great differences among the officers, and that a few persons should not work in prison. They saw differences in the activity level in the wing

depending on who was working. Some are more effective than others, and some put all their efforts in the work, and comprehend the situation, while others do not care that much. Nevertheless, in average they were highly satisfied. Four of the respondents pointed out that they could see that the officers were stressed sometimes, and had an understanding of their lack of time and resources. However, it was frustrating when such circumstances led to disadvantages for them. For instance, appointments concerning training and shower could be broken because of time limitations or due to poor information flow between the working shifts. It could happen that routines were changed without informing the prisoners, or delays caused of particular episodes or acute staff problems could result in breaking the inmates circle and causing frustration.

The prison officers' background

The prison officers have two very clear but distinctive main objectives stated formally in the government report. The values, objectives and principles of the Norwegian Correctional Service (kriminalomsorgen) are based on humanity, legal protection, protection against encroachment and arbitrariness, and the convicted/remanded should not be subjected to other restrictions or more strict conditions than what follows from the sanction.

Everyday life in prison is to be characterized by active cooperation between the employees and the inmates. The work should protect the interests of society and at the same time give the prisoners the best conditions possible for a life without crime.

The prison officers carry out their duties in the interest of society and the welfare of the prisoner at the same time. This dual relationship between presenting the executive power and its security demands may conflict or work in tension to caring tasks.

Some of my informants described the culture among prison officers to be kind of special, very social and detangled from the rest of society. This milieu can be seen as shaped by the persons' backgrounds and evolving in relation to the environment in which they interact.

Prison officers' perceptions about the isolated prisoner and their work

Important for the motivation and quality of the work of the officers is how they perceive the inmates and the importance and satisfaction they find in their work.

Satisfaction of the work:

The informants in general described their work with remand prisoners as positive. Mostly they like their work and see it as sometimes exiting and challenging:

“-I really like it. It is another kind of care than with convicted prisoners. You see the results of the help clearer.” -“You get new questions everyday, which you maybe never really have considered before.” -“It is positive that you do not have to relate to the prisoner for a long time, but at the same time it is a hassle that they disappear as soon as you get a good relation to them.” -“You get variation and something new all the time.”

Relation with the inmates:

Everyone reported the relation with the inmates to be generally good:

“-In general it is good. In 99% and more than that it is a very okay relation, no aggression towards us at all.” -“Remand prisoners are also usually more contact seeking.” -“Very good, if it is to function it needs to be good, necessary to aim for that, it is respect both ways.”

Related to interaction and crime, all the prison officers told that they perceived the person they have in front of them, and not the crime. One told that he could find it problematic to relate to the crime of child molesters, but not when dealing with them in a professional contexts, or concerning concrete situations in the prison. Three of the informants described the demanding and sometimes exhausting effects of being over time close to a group of people with so severe problems and occasionally abnormal behavior. Only one of my informants had experienced being physically attack. Everyone had experienced verbal assaults though, in various degrees. Any experience of violent episodes may inflict on how officers perceive the interactions with the inmates.

In relation to how often the prisoners are let outside the cell, we can identify to ways of thinking among the officers when it comes to attendance of security. One opinion involves giving the inmates the opportunity to get out as often as recourses make it possible. In this way they may loosen their frustration, solve small problems, or just talk and see something else than the cell. This strategy results in less frustration and aggression, thus less risk for aggressive behavior or dangerous episodes. The other perspective consider it necessary to attend to security by not having a too high activity level, hence too many outside the cells, thereby have a better overview and control over what is happening. It is not necessary this black and white, but there are continuously negotiations how to solve the combination of practical tasks and attending to the prisoners' needs.

Perceptions of the individual in custody:

The officers expressed the conditions for the prisoners in general to be from okay to good. How each individual in custody experienced the imprisonment was described to be

dependent on individual differences, if they were in prison for first time, and related to national origin. If they did not speak Norwegian or English, it could be extra hard.

Concerning prisoners on restrictions, all the officer informants described the prisoners to experience problems from the isolation:

“They have problems when they arrive, or they might be okay for the first or second week, after two weeks everyone starts to endure difficulties, no matter who you are or how tough you are. It’s an endless downhill, often with suicide thoughts.” -“Of course it is damaging, everyone sees that.” -“Just to be allowed talking to other prisoners is of great importance.” -“There is not much for them in here. We feel it in our everyday work that it may be difficult to give the contact that is necessary.”

It might be difficult to assess the different individual problems caused by isolation, as the after-effects sometime occur after they are released.

The perceptions of the officers may relate to how much effort they put in their work and their priorities. It also gives a meaning in what they do and influence their motivation.

Perception of their colleagues’ work:

The informants revealed some differences among their colleagues. Even though, absolutely most are considered to be skilled and concerned, a few were described to be burnt-out and to avoid inmates, while some showed extra initiative to converse with the prisoners in the cells. They agreed that most people share the humanistic values and are conscious about the problems of isolation. However, one of the informants explicitly argued that the officers in general do not make enough effort in their work considered the problematic situation for the prisoners. They use too much energy socializing with each other.

This may relate to statements about the peculiar job of interacting with a special group of people in what are rather extreme conditions, which over time may be exhausting. Several of my colleagues have expressed the need to protect themselves from the undefined factors of the “prison-effects” that are wearing you out physically and mentally. These “undefined” factors are therefore relational to the energy used on the prisoners in isolation. It is certainly a topic which could be discussed in detail in another investigation. No matter how extreme, bizarre, happy, tragic or violent some episodes might be, or having to execute control through security tasks, prison officers have to relate to them the next morning. In few other jobs are people stuck with a special group of people in such a special relation over time. Therefore, some express the need for taking breaks from the periodically hectically everyday work and demanding clientele.

Accordingly, both groups of informants report good, professional and functional relationships between them, and outline some of the same problems concerning time and recourses. In fact, larger inconsistency exists within the groups than in between. In sum both groups described the work and attitudes of the prison officers to be very good, but that there are some differences, and that a few officers might be tired of their work.

In contrast to prisoners serving their sentence, we do see a significant difference in the relation to the prison officers. Remand prisoners are more dependent on having a good relationship to the few people that they can associate with, since they do not to the same extent have the opportunity to get support from other inmates. They also more directly experience that the officers are there to help them.

Prisoners serving sentence usually have more time together with the officers, and the ambivalence between the dual roles as both a guard and a helper become more

apparent. We can then see how the working method, time recourses, uniforms, routines, regulations, and prison system in addition to the heterogeneity of the social individuals influence on the human relationships.

Concerning prisoners close to suicide:

Everyone had experienced prisoners with serious problems. Formally they contact the health personnel, psychiatric team, superior officer and write it in the journals. Objects that might be used for suicide attempts are removed and they are given regularly supervision. The officers are well educated on the issues of isolation and suicide, and trained in personal interaction with prisoners undergoing substantial problems. The answers they gave reflected this, and the empathetic approach needed during conversation. However, from my own experience and from the informants there is frustration concerning time and potential solutions. Several officers find the limited capacity available for prisoners with problems hard and exhausting to relate to. The unions of the prison officers have in several occasions communicated the problems of custody and prisoners' health to politicians and the media.

Two of the informants emphasized that it was too much up to the individual officer on duty to follow up the persons with problems, as long as it was not an acute situation.

The officers contact with leadership, concerning motivation, feedback and guidance:

Generally, the officer informants were satisfied with the closest leader of the wing, principal officer, regarding positive feedback, motivation and being available.

On the other hand four of the informants were highly critical toward the prison management in several respects. The criticism mainly concerned poor feedback and information, uni-directional bureaucratic leading structure, and with reference to focus and priorities. Four of the respondents declared that they may communicate their points of view in meetings, but they did not feel it was taken into consideration. One of the informants pointed out that the informative communication mainly concerns personnel matters, and not a visionary discussion about professional content.

The hierarchical organizational structure can therefore be said to have an influence on the interactions between the human actors. From talking with my informants and other colleagues through years of work experience, I will claim that the relation to, and perceptions of the leadership and organizational structure, are relevant to the employee's motivation and performance of the institution's objectives and ideas. It concerns both factors of job-satisfaction, turnover among officers, as well as disagreements about professional matters in the work with the prisoners

